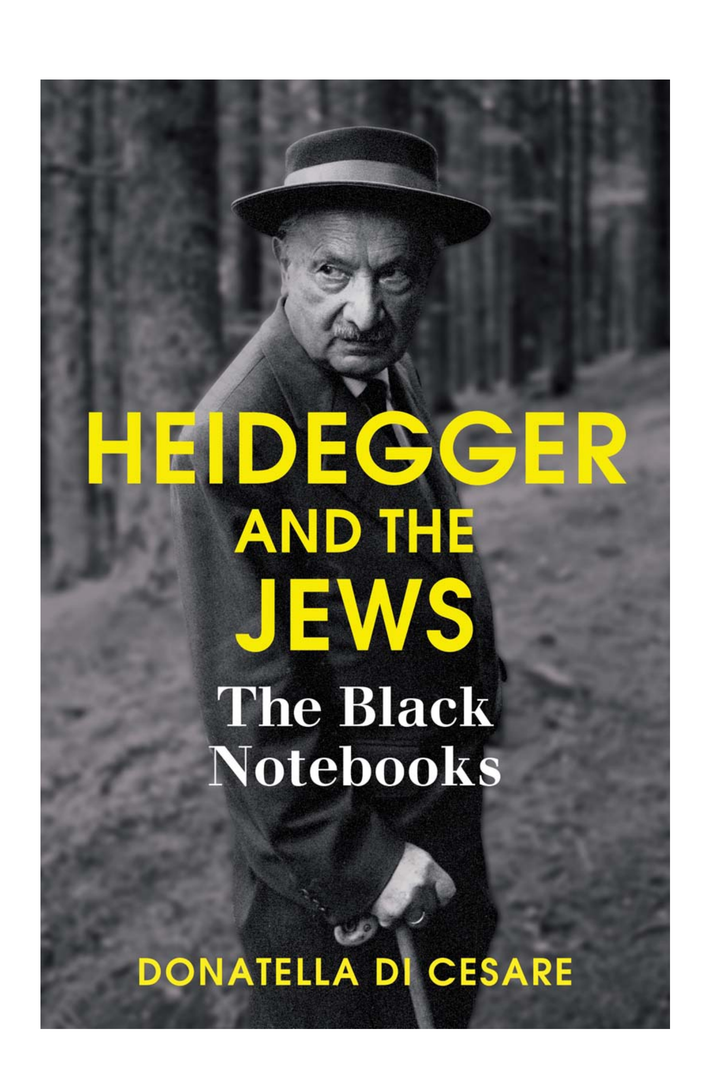

HEIDEGGER
AND THE
JEWS
The Black
Notebooks
DONATELLA DI CESARE

Contents

Cover

Copyright

Foreword

I Between Politics and Philosophy

1 A Media Affair

2 A Nazi by Chance . . .

3 Biographical Detail, or Philosophical Nexus?

4 Heidegger, an Anti-Semite?

5 What Has Been Left Unsaid about the Jewish Question

6 The Black Notebooks

7 Reductio ad Hitlerum On the Posthumous Trial of Heidegger

8 A Calling to Account?

9 From Derrida to Schürmann: Toward an Anarchic Reading

10 Taming Heidegger

11 The Exclusion of Nazism from Philosophy

12 Philosophical Commitment and Political Decision

Notes

II Philosophy and Hatred of the Jews

1 Luther, Augustine, and "the Jews and Their Lies"

2 The "Jewish Question" in Philosophy

3 Kant and the "Euthanasia of Judaism"

4 Hegel and the Jew without Property

5 "Anti-anti-Semite?" Nietzsche, the Antichrist, and the Falsification of Values

6 Lies and Fakery: The Non-being of the Jew in Mein Kampf

Notes

III The Question of Being and the Jewish Question
1 The Night of Being
2 In An Esoteric Tone . . .
3 Anti-Semitism and Never-dispelled Doubts
4 Metaphors of an Absence
5 The Jew and the Oblivion of Being
6 The Greeks, the Germans – and the Jews
7 The Rootless Agents of Acceleration
8 Against the Jewish Intellectuals
9 Geist and ruach: The "Original Fire" and the Spectral Breath
10 Machination and Power
11 The Desertification of the Earth
12 The Apocalyptic and the "Prince of This World"
13 The Deracification of Peoples
14 Race or Rank?
15 The Metaphysics of Blood
16 "My 'Attack' on Husserl"
17 Heidegger, Jünger, and the Topology of the Jew
18 The Enemy: Heidegger versus Schmitt
19 Polemos and Total War
20 Weltjudentum: The Jewish World Conspiracy
21 Judeo-Bolshevism
22 Weltlos – Without World: The Jew and the Stone
23 Metaphysical Anti-Semitism
24 The Jew and the "Purification" of Being
25 "What Is It about No-thing?"
Notes
IV After Auschwitz
1 Bellum judaicum
2 To Abdicate to Silence?
3 "The Production of Corpses" and Ontic Indifference

4 The Ontological Massacre: Parmenides and Auschwitz
5 “Do They die? They Do Not Die, They Are Liquidated . . .”
6 Positionality, Technology, Crime
7 The Northeast Wind: Heading Toward Defeat
8 Selbstvernichtung: The Shoah and the “Self-Annihilation” of the Jews
9 The Betrayal of the “German Essence”
10 If Germany is a Lager, Then Who Is the Victim?
11 The “Question of Guilt” and the Crime Against the Germans
12 The “Note for Jackasses”: Against the Jewish Prophecy
13 World Democracy and the Dictatorship of Monotheism
14 “An Old Spirit of Revenge Makes its Way upon the Earth”
15 Whether It Is Possible to Forgive a Rabbi
16 Cousin Gross and Cousin Klein Jews and Family Resemblances
17 The Oblivion of the Jew: The Hidden Debt
18 Where Paul is Hidden
19 The Future of Being and the Hebrew Name
20 A Pagan Landscape
21 The Other Beginning, the Beginning of the Other: Anarchy, Birth
22 An Angel in the Black Forest: Apocalypse and Revolution
Notes
Index
End User License Agreement

Heidegger and the Jews

The *Black Notebooks*

Donatella Di Cesare

Translated by Murtha Baca

polity

First published in Italian as *Heidegger e gli ebrei. I "Quaderni neri"* © Bollati Boringhieri editore, Turin, 2014

The translation of this book has been funded by SEPS
Segretariato Europeo per le Pubblicazioni Scientifiche



Via Val d'Aposa 7 - 40123 Bologna - Italy
seps@seps.it - www.seps.it

Polity Press
65 Bridge Street
Cambridge CB2 1UR, UK

Polity Press
101 Station Landing
Suite 300
Medford, MA 02155, USA

ISBN-13: 978-1-5095-0386-5

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Di Cesare, Donatella, author.Title: Heidegger and the Jews : the Black notebooks / Donatella Di Cesare.Other titles: Heidegger e gli Ebrei. EnglishDescription: English edition. | Medford, MA : Polity, 2018. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018001624 (print) | LCCN 2018018674 (ebook) | ISBN 9781509503865 (Epub) | ISBN 9781509503827 (hardback) | ISBN 9781509503834 (pbk.)

Subjects: LCSH: Heidegger, Martin, 1889-1976. Schwarze Hefte. |

Antisemitism--Germany--History--20th century. | Antisemitism--Philosophy.

Classification: LCC B3279.H48 (ebook) | LCC B3279.H48 S36233513 2018 (print) | DDC 193--dc23LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2018001624

For further information on Polity, visit our website: politybooks.com

Foreword

I hope that this book will be judged only after it has been read all the way to the end. In our times, there is little tolerance for complexity. The preference is for simple "pro" or "con" answers, opposite poles, black or white. But whoever philosophizes must tolerate complexity, must inhabit the varying shades of reflection. This holds true all the more for a delicate question like the one dealt with in this book.

The *Black Notebooks* have not placed a tombstone on Heidegger's thought. Some had hoped that they would, with a sort of prediction that belied itself. Rather, something unusual happened – something that goes far beyond the interest that is normally elicited by a philosopher's unpublished writings. What was sparked was an intense debate that, often in heated tones, has gone beyond the boundaries of the academy, extending to the world of culture and involving an increasingly broad audience. And Heidegger has always been the leading character. The liveliness of the debate demonstrates the continuing relevance of his thought.

When considered carefully, the scandal of the *Black Notebooks* has very little that is scandalous about it. If these notebooks are disturbing, if they literally represent a stumbling block, it is because they overturn the schemas by which Heidegger has been interpreted up to now. In that traditional interpretation, Heidegger's political thought, for example, was reduced to or circumscribed within a brief span of time. But the *Black Notebooks* reveal a philosopher who was attentive to historical events, and aware of his own political decisions. This is why the scandal has had such a striking effect on the "Heideggerians" and, more generally, on the world of continental philosophy.

The two extreme positions about the *Black Notebooks* have been either to dismiss Heidegger altogether, or to "return to Messkirch." On the one hand, there is an expression of moral indignation, while still reserving the right to use Heidegger's work for one's own purposes; on the other hand is the desire for everything to

remain as it had been, regardless of what is written in the *Black Notebooks*. Both of these positions are profoundly anti-philosophical, rhetorical gestures.

The task of philosophy is, above all, critical interpretation, as sustained by the tradition that Heidegger himself contributed to nurturing: philosophical hermeneutics. It is impossible to know what the results will be of the publication of the *Black Notebooks* – what the effects will be. But an author lives in the history of effects, as Hans-Georg Gadamer said. And the *Black Notebooks*, whether one likes it or not, are now an integral element of Heidegger's thought and of the history of its effects – an element that cannot be ignored.

This book takes into account what Heidegger wrote about the Jews and Judaism in the *Black Notebooks* that have been published as of this writing, which date from 1931 to 1948. The anti-Semitism revealed in the notebooks is their great novelty. This does not mean that it is their only theme – there are many others. Choosing to confront the so-called "Jewish question" therefore does not imply – as some have insinuated – that this is a single, exclusive theme.

Heidegger's anti-Semitism cannot in any way be minimized, much less denied. The sterile and in some ways macabre nature of the passages of the *Black Notebooks* where Heidegger speaks about "Jews," "Judaism," "Jewish," "Jewishness" – passages that are, moreover, much more numerous than one might imagine – does not silence the presence or the importance of the anti-Semitism expressed therein. The two defensive strategies that have been hitherto adopted – the one that refers to Heidegger's personal relationships with particular Jews, and the other that would like to annul the entire question by maintaining that anti-Semitism does not touch the core of Heidegger's thought – are both sure to be proven vain and inconsistent.

I have selected the adjective "metaphysical" to characterize Heidegger's anti-Semitism. I was already convinced of the continuity of this anti-Semitism before the publication of the first volume of the *Black Notebooks*, GA 97, which contains the pages dating from the postwar period – pages that confirm that continuity. For that matter, anti-Semitism is not an emotion, a

feeling of hatred that comes and goes and can be circumscribed within a particular period. Anti-Semitism has a theological provenance and a political intention. In the case of Heidegger, it also takes on a philosophical significance.

The adjective "metaphysical" does not mitigate Heidegger's anti-Semitism. On the contrary, it is an indication of how deeply rooted that anti-Semitism was. Metaphysical anti-Semitism is more abstract and at the same time more dangerous than a simple aversion to Jews and Judaism. But the adjective "metaphysical" also refers to the tradition of Western metaphysics. In his metaphysical anti-Semitism, Heidegger was not alone: he followed in the footsteps of a long line of philosophers, from Kant to Hegel to Nietzsche. I have reconstructed a brief history of anti-Semitism among German philosophers in order to contextualize and make more understandable in their complex development some of the stereotypes and concepts that were dealt with by Heidegger.

As is well known, "metaphysics" was the way in which, above all during the 1930s, Heidegger criticized the Western tradition. If I speak of "metaphysical anti-Semitism," it is because I maintain that Heidegger, in his attempt to define Jews and Judaism, fell back on metaphysics in his own turn. At the time of the Nuremberg laws, defining what a Jew was constituted one of the main tasks of the Nazi party. In his history of Being, Heidegger encountered the Jew; he intuited that the Jew was not "the enemy," but rather "the Other" who, in his very otherness, could represent the passage for which he himself was searching, beyond metaphysics. Indeed, as this book attempts to demonstrate, there were numerous points of convergence between Heidegger's thinking and Judaism, from the concept of nothingness to the concept of time. But Heidegger recoiled. Being was more important. The Jew was left aside.

And yet the Jewish question lies at the heart of Heidegger's thought, at the center of the question *par excellence* of philosophy. To the Jews, seen as the rootless agents of modernity, accused of machination to seize power, of the desertification of the earth, of uprooting peoples, condemned to be *weltlos* – worldless, "without world" – Heidegger imputed the gravest guilt: the oblivion of Being. The Jew was a sign of the end of everything, impeding the rise of a new beginning.

Heidegger shared a vision of the Jews that was widespread during those years – a vision that would lead to a *bellum judaicum*. This does not mean that he was a precursor to the extermination of the Jews. The *Black Notebooks* obviate the great topos of twentieth-century philosophy: that of Heidegger's silence. For that very reason, they raise the question, hitherto too often avoided, of the responsibility of philosophers. It is in this sense that I speak of an "ontological massacre." The theme of the "*Selbstvernichtung des Jüdischen*" (self-annihilation of that which is Jewish) will give us much to think about, as the inversion that Heidegger used to usurp even the role of victim from the Jews will give us much to discuss. Thus, the *Black Notebooks* impose upon us the task of philosophically re-thinking what happened after 1945 as well.

I
BETWEEN POLITICS AND PHILOSOPHY

Repentance is not a virtue.[1]

Don't expect denial, nor repentance [. . .] It's time for me to admit what I was, a philosopher, and a Nazi as much as you like, but a philosopher.[2]

1 A Media Affair

No other philosopher has aroused such a furor *post mortem*. Ever since, as early as 1945, "the Heidegger affair" – "l'affaire," as the French say – became an issue, alternating phases have been imposed on public opinion, but with a resonance that has never failed, and that, in fact, has spread and become more intense in recent times.[3] News of the recent revelations has burst out in newspapers and other media outlets around the world. It has even found space in *The New York Times*.[4]

The loftiest ideas have given rise to the most profound horror. And it is not difficult to understand the scandal. The greatness of Heidegger the philosopher and the baseness of Heidegger the Nazi constitute an extravagant antinomy, an unacceptable paradox. Heidegger is like a two-headed Janus who disturbingly shows two faces – one praiseworthy, the other ignoble. To avoid this dissociating, distressing vision, the alternative, suggested also by the urgency of the pressure exerted by the media, seems to be clear and clean: if Heidegger was a great philosopher, then he was not a Nazi, and if he was a Nazi, then he was not a great philosopher.

While the media outlets demand a succinct, definitive answer, a closure to the case, it also is the media that constantly re-open the issue, sensationalizing it by publishing things that have previously been hidden and unknown. Thus, over the years, a philosophical case has become a media affair. Heidegger, who was well aware of the complex theme of journalism, reflected on the notion of "resonance." The more that information is concealed behind the appearance of objectivity – seeming to simplify issues by eliminating difficulties and problems, making a question seem

superfluous and innocuous – the greater the need for an actual experience, the spasmodic desire to access that which, having remained mysteriously in the background, excites, moves, inebriates, creates a sensation.[5] Just as this desire has no sense of embarrassment or shame, so also the mechanism that provides public access to formerly hidden information has no limits – it is an endless whirlwind. Heidegger was aware that his ideas were threatened by that incapacity to preserve the original question. In a letter to Hannah Arendt dated April 12, 1950, he wrote:

> The way journalism is practiced around the world may be the first twitch of this coming devastation of all beginnings and how they are handed down. Is this pessimism? Is it despair? No! But a thinking that bears in mind that a history imagined only historically does not necessarily determine what is essential about human existence; that length of duration is no measure for the presence of essence; that an instant of *rupture* can be "more being"; that man must prepare for this "Being" and learn a different kind of remembrance; that, even with all that, something exalted is in store for him; that the fate of the Jews and the Germans does have its own truth, for which our historical calculation is no match.[6]

Certainly, journalism itself was not a threat for Heidegger. On more than one occasion, he praised the media for knowing how to "be on the alert" for what goes beyond the simple news of the day.[7] Didn't Heidegger grant his final interview, which was almost his philosophical last will and testament, to the magazine *Der Spiegel*? Rather than seeing journalism as a threat, Heidegger intuited that his case would become an affair taken up by "planetary journalism," and he feared that the haste of the media would speed up the closing of his case, taking away the sense of urgency, canceling out any further questions.

2 A Nazi by Chance . . .

In spite of a series of new revelations, the discovery of letters and documents, the slow emergence from what Heidegger left behind in the form of unpublished texts and university course materials, in spite of the pioneering work of Hugo Ott and the provocative books by Victor Farías in 1987 and Emmanuel Faye in 2005, over

the years there has been an official version of Heidegger's Nazism that has only occasionally undergone some re-touching.[8] It is worthwhile to give a brief summary of this official version.

In a life without a biography, as the life of every philosopher should be – according to the formula, "our only interest is that he was born at a certain time, that he worked, and that he died," with which Heidegger, in 1924, had concluded his exemplary biography of Aristotle – Heidegger's undeniable Nazism would be nothing more than a "political intermezzo."[9] Seemingly spurred on by circumstances more than by a deep conviction, Heidegger took up the post of rector of the University of Freiburg on April 21, 1933, and on May 1 he registered as a member of the NSDAP, the National Socialist Party, with the precise intention of safeguarding his academic freedom from political intrusions. But joining the NSDAP had no effect whatsoever, both because of Heidegger's increasingly strident divergences from the upper echelons of the party, and on account of the ingenuousness with which he had aspired to become the spiritual guide of the movement, to guide even the *Führer* himself.[10] His defeat was resounding, and the "failure" – as Heidegger recorded in a letter to Karl Jaspers written in 1935 – must have weighed heavily on his mind.[11] He had no other choice but to learn a lesson from his political mistake; his resignation as rector of the university was accepted on April 27, 1934. All in all, it was a circumscribed period – just a year – a shameful parenthesis in his life, a passing incident, an accidental Nazism.

And afterward? The image of Heidegger that the official version disseminated is that of a philosopher in exile, isolated in Todtnauberg, in his refuge in the Black Forest, bent over the manuscripts of his university lectures, immersed in the evocative silence of the woods, far from the clamor of political life, searching for another destiny for Germany along the banks of the rivers of Hölderlin. The time of Heidegger's *Kehre*, the "turn" in his thinking, would coincide with an increasingly marked distance on his part from Nazism and the tragic events related to it – to the point of making it possible to characterize his position as intellectual opposition or internal resistance.

First suspected by the Nazis, and then despised by the occupying Allied forces, Heidegger had to endure hostility and humiliation,

paying dearly for that fatal error of his. In 1945 he was subjected to the judgment of the Allied Council on the Legal Purge; in 1946, he was barred from teaching. Karl Jaspers' opinion was decisive.12 In the winter of 1945–6, Heidegger had a nervous breakdown, and was admitted to a sanatorium in Badenweiler; he recovered thanks to his work and to new projects that he undertook. A few years later, on September 26, 1951, he was re-instated by the university, but his chair was not restored to him. This act of rehabilitation marked the formal end of the chapter "Heidegger and Nazism."

This version of the story of Heidegger's relationship with Nazism leaves many questions unanswered. Why did he remain a member of the Nazi party until 1945? Why did he never condemn his mistake, if indeed it had been a mistake? Why did he never distance himself from his past? And what can be said about his obstinate silence, mute and impenetrable, which was assailed with questions and conjectures by poets and philosophers, from Paul Celan to Jacques Derrida?

3 Biographical Detail, or Philosophical Nexus?

If Heidegger's Nazism was a mistake, limited to politics, contained within a very brief period, then it can easily be demoted to the status of a historical event of little importance. Indeed, it would be nothing more than a small biographical detail. This is why, when it is not completely passed over, it is usually treated only summarily in the pages dedicated to Heidegger's life. The detail of his brief adherence to Nazism has nothing to do with Heidegger's philosophy. What did his position as rector of Freiburg University have to do with the demise of metaphysics?

This is what bothers philosophers – not so much on account of the uproar that the case has raised in the media as for the enormous number of pamphlets and polemical writings relentlessly focusing on that detail that have given rise to a heated, at times virulent, debate, but one that is almost always flat and superficial. The heaping up of facts and documents, deeds and misdeeds, rather than clarifying the case, has if anything made it even more murky. The discussion, in its evident mediocrity, has gone on and on in alternating phases, remaining almost unchanged, because even his

expert accusers, often unwittingly, reduce Heidegger's Nazism to a historical event in his life. Thus, they end up validating the official version. It is not by chance that the contributions of these critics of Heidegger are generally devoid of philosophical solidity. But those who concentrate on the story of Heidegger the human being, on his poetic language, his innovations, are not interested – and why should they be? – in the defects, baseness, contradictions, and pettiness of the man. The despicableness of the philosopher is not the despicableness of his philosophy.

One is tempted to say that the analytic philosophers who – not without effort – keep life and philosophy separate are right. This problem arose in recent times with the publication of letters, diaries, and unpublished texts by Ludwig Wittgenstein. What legitimate use can be made of documents like these? In what way can the life story of a philosopher be important for understanding his ideas? Adherents of analytic philosophy would say that there is no way that the life of a philosopher is important for such an understanding.13 And yet Wittgenstein himself wrote: "Work on philosophy [. . .] is really more a work on oneself. On one's own interpretation. On one's own way of seeing things."14

This question, which is a very old one for the continental philosophers, imbues the delicate case of Gottlob Frege, the founder of analytic philosophy. Frege, who sympathized with the extreme right, posited a "Third Realm" in logic.15 On April 30, 1924, he wrote in his diary: "One can acknowledge that the Jews are of the highest respectability, and yet regard it as a misfortune that there are so many Jews in Germany and that they have complete equality of political rights with citizens of Aryan descent."16 A few days earlier, on April 22, Frege had confessed that "only in the last years" had he "really learned to comprehend anti-Semitism"; looking forward to the eventual enactment of what he considered timely "laws against the Jews," he stressed the importance of not forgetting to impose a "distinguishing mark" that would make it possible "to be able to recognize a Jew." In fact, Frege saw an effective "problem" here.17 The editors of Frege's works have been careful to exclude his diary, with the intention, if not of hiding it completely, at least of attenuating its impact. Certainly, it is not necessary to concern oneself with an author's anti-Semitism in order to read his treatise on logic, but

Frege evoked numerous connections between the logical Reich and the theological and political Reichs.

Yet philosophy cannot be reduced to logic, nor identified with science; thus, a separation between the life and thought of a philosopher is abstract and artificial. This holds true especially for Heidegger, much like the model of Friedrich Nietzsche, who, as is well known, maintained that philosophy was an expression of one's individuality. In emphasizing the difference between philosophy and science, Heidegger observed: "the point of departure of the path to philosophy is *factical life experience*"; but "philosophy itself can only be reached through a turning around of that path," with repercussions on life.18

If this is the case – if a choice made in one's life is at the same time a philosophical act – then political engagement is not a mere historical incident, and, behind the apparent biographical detail, there is perhaps concealed a philosophical nexus.

4 Heidegger, an Anti-Semite?

Whatever might be said about Heidegger's Nazism – as we read in a recent publication – "not a single anti-Semitic phrase" can be found in any of his works.19 The lack of concrete proof of Heidegger's purported anti-Semitism has contributed to the official version of the story. If he wasn't an anti-Semite, then it is unlikely that Heidegger was a Nazi, according to this perspective. His political error seems thus to be lessened; his adherence to Nazism recedes into the background.

Heidegger, an anti-Semite? No, he was not. This has been the prevalent response for a long time. It is true that the hatred toward the Jews that the Nazis were quick to demonstrate did not lead Heidegger to distance himself from that movement; and yet his position cannot be compared to that of the racist ideologues of his day. Authoritative scholars such as Bernd Martin and Rüdiger Safranski are convinced of this.20 But this conviction was common even among Heidegger's own Jewish students – "Heidegger's children," as Richard Wolin calls them with a certain note of sarcasm.21 Karl Löwith, Hans Jonas, Hannah Arendt, Herbert Marcuse: none of them ever made any insinuation of anti-Semitism against their teacher, whom they did not hesitate to

criticize and reproach for other reasons. And yet their testimony would have been a determining factor.

There are two main arguments to be made with regard to the most serious accusation against Heidegger – that of anti-Semitism. This would make his enthusiasm for the Nazi movement much more understandable, but would also run the risk of jeopardizing his work.

The first argument is biographical in nature, and raises the issue of Heidegger's personal relationships, friendships, and love affairs. How can we explain the magnetic attraction that Heidegger held for so many young Jews, first in Marburg and later in Freiburg? And the help that he gave to Jewish colleagues? A name that often comes up in this regard is that of Werner Brock, who, thanks to Heidegger's intervention, succeeded in obtaining a scholarship to study at Cambridge. Not to mention Heidegger's love affairs with Jewish women: Hannah Arendt, Elisabeth Blochmann, Mascha Laléko. How could hatred and love go together? As his pupil Hans Jonas confirmed: "Heidegger wasn't a personal anti-Semite," "Nein – Heidegger war kein persönlicher Antisemit."[22]

The second argument stresses Heidegger's distance from the "ideological lunacy" of the racists. His National Socialism was "decisionist," according to Safranski: "What mattered to him was not origin but decision. In his terminology, a man should be judged not by his 'thrownness,' but by his 'design.'"[23] Heidegger did not intend to "exclude" others in the process of constructing a "new spiritual world." Thus, he would have had no commonality with the crude, crass anti-Semitism of the Nazis – much less with the "spiritual" brand of anti-Semitism that maintained that there was a "Jewish spirit" that should be defended against.[24] At the most, Heidegger showed a certain propensity, purely academic, to share the "competition anti-Semitism" of people who were worried about the overwhelming number of Jews in the German universities and who spoke about the danger of *Verjüdung* – "Jewification."[25]

These two strategies for defending Heidegger were employed by Holger Zaborowski in an essay that, if on the one hand it reconstructs the entire debate, on the other hand, also takes into consideration the new materials that have come to light. By means

of a historical investigation, focusing on documents, letters, and testimonies, Zaborowski attempts not only to rehabilitate Heidegger's behavior toward Jews, but also – and above all – to defend Heidegger's ideas against any negative imputation. Zaborowski does admit to a certain ambivalence. But he is quick to point out that in Heidegger's philosophical works there is no trace of "a systematic anti-Semitism."[26] Nor, according to Zaborowski, were there "moments" or phases of anti-Semitism on Heidegger's part. In a rather forced, arduous attempt to achieve a sense of balance, Zaborowski dismantles the few pieces of evidence of Heidegger's anti-Semitism, silences the rumors, and dispels suspicions and doubts. Thus, according to him, there was no anti-Semitism in Heidegger, neither open nor latent, personal nor philosophical – just a couple of remarks in his correspondence with his wife Elfride, remarks that can be traced to that "university anti-Jewish" attitude that was part of the spirit of the time.[27] In the absence of other textual evidence, Zaborowski reaches the conclusion that anti-Semitism was far from Heidegger's system of thought.

If this thesis has prevailed up to now, it is on account of the difficulty of maintaining, at one and the same time, the image of the philosopher who examines the question of Being, aspiring to authenticity, and the image of the common anti-Semite who, with his political gesture, becomes an anonymous Everyman, the average man whom Heidegger so deprecated in *Being and Time* – one of the millions of men who conformed to Nazism.[28]

Prominent among the dissonant voices is that of Jeanne Hersch, who, in an essay published in 1988, recalling among other things the time when she was studying in Freiburg in the 1930s, wrote: "Heidegger was not an anti-Semite, just as many non-Jews usually are not, but who, nevertheless, are not anti-anti-Semites." And, with regard to the impossibility of reducing Heidegger the philosopher to the level of the Nazi Everyman, Hersch wonders whether "*in Heidegger's philosophy*, or, if you will, *in Heidegger the philosopher*, there are not points to which his adherence to National Socialism can be anchored; thus compensating, in his own eyes, for certain disagreements, certain repugnancies, and, above all, points that would have instilled in Heidegger the hopes for a *prophetic future*."[29]

5 What Has Been Left Unsaid about the Jewish Question

A new chapter recently opened in "the Heidegger affair," after which it would be difficult to say that there is "nothing new." In fact, it is a *decisive* chapter, both because it should resolve a controversy that has been going on for a long time, and because it deals with the nature of the decision that Heidegger made in the 1930s. The *Schwarze Hefte*, the *Black Notebooks* edited by Peter Trawny and published by Klostermann in 2014, contain what had previously been unsaid but many people had supposed, or hoped, was also un-thought.

On the last page of the notebook entitled *Ponderings XIV*, written shortly after the German offensive toward the East announced by Hitler on June 22, 1941, Heidegger noted:

> The question of the role of *world-Judaism* [*Weltjudentum*] is not a racial [*rassisch*] question, but a metaphysical [*metaphysische*] one, a question that concerns the kind of human existence which in an *utterly unrestrained* way can undertake as a world-historical "task" the uprooting of all beings from Being.30

On numerous occasions in the *Black Notebooks*, and in different contexts, Heidegger wrote about Jews, Judaism, and the "Jewish question." He clearly stated that this was not a "racial" question, but rather a "metaphysical" one. Beyond any possible misunderstanding, he asserted that the theme of Judaism should be addressed within the history of Being. What is the relationship between Being and the Jews? In what way do the Jews undermine Being, and its history? What connection is there between *Seinfrage* – the question *par excellence* in philosophy – and *Judenfrage*, the Jewish question?

This is what is new about the *Black Notebooks* – in them, anti-Semitism has a philosophical dimension and is seen in the context of the history of man's existence. It is not a biographical detail that can be set aside, put in a corner, forgotten, because that would be forgetting the existence of man. Archival research gives way to testimony; the meticulous search for small or large bits of proof of

Heidegger's involvement with anti-Semitism, the reconstruction of the particular period in history, of what was going on in German universities at the time – all of this recedes into the background, losing a great deal of its significance, in the face of the reflections of Heidegger the philosopher speaking in the first person. The "Heidegger affair" can no longer be considered a time-worn historical diatribe. Rather, it is now established as a philosophical issue that directly calls into question philosophers and philosophy.

In light of the *Black Notebooks*, Heidegger's adherence to National Socialism takes on much clearer outlines, because it was based on a metaphysical form of anti-Semitism. The radical nature of this kind of anti-Semitism casts new light on the fact that Heidegger joined the National Socialist party in 1933 – we now know that this was neither a random incident, nor a mistake. Rather, it was the result of a political choice that was coherent with Heidegger's ideas. And his subsequent silence also appears to have been coherent with his ideas in an exemplary fashion. Anti-Semitism was not, in fact, an ideological "add-on" – it was the cornerstone of National Socialism. This also debunks the notion held by many that Heidegger's anti-Semitism was a far cry from that of Carl Schmitt or Ernst Jünger, for example.

Thus, a page has been turned, and a new chapter opened, in which questions must be raised that have until now been largely avoided. The first and most urgent of these questions is that of the Shoah within the history of Western metaphysics.

6 The *Black Notebooks*

In the mid-1970s, 34 notebooks bound in black oilcloth were deposited in the Deutsches Literaturarchiv in Marbach am Neckar. Heidegger had expressed the desire that the notebooks be published at the end of his complete works. Until that moment – as Heidegger's son Hermann has stated – they were supposed to remain secret, "double-locked." No one was supposed to read them, or even know about them. Heidegger's wishes about the notebooks were only partially disregarded. The long time that it was taking to publish his other works led the administrator of his literary estate to hasten the publication of the *Schwarze Hefte*.

The notebooks cover a period of almost 40 years – roughly 1930 to

1970. They are organized in the following way: 14 notebooks [numbered II to XV] are entitled *Überlegungen* (*Ponderings*), nine are *Ammerkungen* (*Notes*), two are *Vier Hefte* (*Four Notebooks*), two *Vigiliae*, one *Nocturne*, two *Winke* (*Indications*), four *Vorläufiges* (*Preliminaries*). Two other notebooks, *Megiston* and *Grundworte* (*Fundamental Words*), have been found; it is not certain that these will be published among Heidegger's complete works. All of the notebooks are classified with Roman numerals. The first notebook, *Überlegungen I*, dating from 1930, is missing as of this writing. It is also possible that other portions of Heidegger's notebooks may have been lost. *Überlegungen XV*, written in 1941, comes to an abrupt halt and has no analytical index, which Heidegger normally compiled at the end of each notebook.

It is to be expected that, in the years to come, all of the *Schwarze Hefte*, comprising volumes 94 through 102 of Heidegger's complete works, will be published. The *Überlegungen II–XV* (comprising volumes 94–6 of the complete works) were published in German in the Spring of 2014, followed in 2015 by volume 97, which covers the period from 1942 to 1948.

The date "October 1931" appears on the first page of *Überlegungen II*. In *Vorläufiges III*, Heidegger wrote the annotation "Le Thor 1969." This means – as Trawny observes – that *Vorläufiges IV* must have been written at the beginning of the 1970s.[31] And yet the numbering of the notebooks does not necessarily indicate a linear sequence. We must presume that, during certain periods, Heidegger was working on more than one notebook at a time. Given that there are few corrections, and that at times the notes are very long, it is probable that there were preliminary drafts of the texts in the notebooks, of which no trace is left. The *Black Notebooks* are neither private annotations, nor – much less – diaries; their style, their content, and, finally, the author's intention clearly indicate that they are philosophical writings.

But why did Heidegger want to have the notebooks published at the end of the edition of his complete works? Are the *Black Notebooks* his philosophical last will and testament? What role do

they play as part of the works he produced? Why did he envision them coming out after his unpublished treatises on the history of Being – texts that are already so esoteric?

A halo of mystery envelops the *Black Notebooks*. They should have been the *eschaton* – not just the last word, but the absolutely final word, uttered at the final frontier, at the abyss of silence. This is the reason for the unique position of these writings, to which Heidegger's unpublished treatises refer, but which, by their very nature, cannot and should not be seen as central to his work. The peculiar eccentricity of the notebooks is revealed in their personal style, which bears the author's imprint. Heidegger speaks in the first person, without too much reticence, with a brisk sense of freedom, his eye looking toward the future. It is as if he were addressing new interlocutors who, thanks to the distance of history, might perhaps be able to understand that dark epoch in European history in a different way. And, as far as Heidegger goes, he does not limit himself to bearing witness; rather, he scrutinizes and deciphers from his "advance outposts," which are at the same time "rearguard positions."32 How could we not think of Nietzsche? But it is Heidegger himself who warns that his reflections are not wise aphorisms or maxims. Rather, they are *Versuche* (experiments) – this is the word that appears in a note from the 1970s, chosen by the editor as an exergue – "attempts at simple designation," neither statements nor notations for a planned system.33 They follow the thread of Heidegger's investigations; they unfold, facilitating a kind of inquiry that is both the content and the form, the theme and the style of the notebooks. In this way, they do not have any term of comparison within Heidegger's work; they represent a *unicum* in the philosophical literature of the twentieth century.

The *Black Notebooks* resemble the shipboard diary of a castaway crossing the night of the world. He is guided by the distant light of a new beginning. The passage, dark and tragic, is illuminated by profound philosophical glimpses and powerful eschatological visions.

7 *Reductio ad Hitlerum* On the Posthumous Trial of Heidegger

Very few questios, but many summary judgments, apodictic verdicts, and lapidary assertions have fomented Heidegger's posthumous trial, which, between sentences of first-degree guilt, appeals, and revisions, has made a powerful entry into the twenty-first century.

The publication of the *Black Notebooks* has re-opened, especially in France, a heated controversy that, upon close consideration, was never really closed. The scenario has embarrassing and caricatural aspects. On one side are the dyed-in-the wool defenders of Heidegger such as François Fédier, who, totally invested in the cult of Heidegger's personality, reject all accusations and deny all evidence; on the other hand are the strenuously dogged, implacable prosecutors, first and foremost Emmanuel Faye, who seems to have made this accusation his life's mission.

Fédier is a pupil of Jean Beaufret – who had been Heidegger's most privileged interlocutor from 1946 on, and who had promoted Heidegger's ideas, especially in the French context. Fédier had responded to Víctor Farías' book as early as 1987 with a pamphlet, originally intended to bear the title *Apology of Heidegger*.34 Some time later, in an attempt to refute the scathing indictment by Faye, Fédier gathered around him a group of scholars and published the miscellany *Heidegger, à plus forte raison* in 2007.35

Faye's voluminous work was a resounding success not so much with philosophers, but with the media and the general public; it was greeted as a new, definitive victory of light over darkness. The refrain "Heidegger the Nazi" was repeated with zealous constancy on almost every page. Evidence, testimonies, and documents were presented, in a net that was more asphyxiating than stringent, to support the accusation and to demand Heidegger's incrimination. The dossier appeared to be complete, and Heidegger, "contaminated" by Nazism, seemed incapable of escaping his well-deserved condemnation. What was the sentence? Perpetual proscription: Heidegger's work "cannot continue to be placed in the philosophy section of libraries."36 For that matter, Heidegger was not even considered to be a "philosopher" by this group; Faye confessed to have been guided by the "growing conviction of the vital necessity of seeing philosophy free itself from the work of

Heidegger."[37] The self-appointed inquisitor Faye therefore proposed that philosophy should proceed to excommunicate Heidegger – is there such a thing as philosophical excommunication? – and that it should admit his definitive demise.

Faye's oversimplifications, which at times border on the absurd – for example, when he believes that he can make out a swastika in the Heideggerian schema of the *Geviert* (the fourfold) – can appear to be convincing at first glance. But what is problematic is precisely Faye's simplistic argument, which, using a well-known formula introduced by Leo Strauss at the beginning of the 1950s, can be called a *reductio ad Hitlerum*. This is a case of an "erroneous method," a *fallacy*, and therefore a variant of a *reductio ad absurdum*: Heidegger's thesis is connected to the position of Hitler, the metonymy of evil.[38] It is in relation to Heidegger, and to his ideas, that Strauss warns against the use of an ethically reprehensible tactic, which, diverting attention from the argument at hand, whose content goes out of focus, points immediately at condemnation. And in effect, the impression, also on the basis of recent developments, is that Faye, consumed by the impulse to be judge and jury, does not take the philosophical issues very much into consideration.[39] Rather, it seems important to re-open the accusation which, this time, could be even more serious: the "introduction of anti-Semitism into philosophy."[40]

The question is hermeneutic: Faye takes Heidegger's great philosophical texts as the encrypted document that testifies to his adherence to Nazism, and, with exegetic zeal, he gives these works a second-class reading, as clever as it is inconsistent, reaching the presumed hidden meaning that, once it has been exposed, purports to be the only true, objective meaning. Obviously, Faye does not accept any other interpretations. This is why his book resembles a prosecuting attorney's case file. A steadfast Cartesian and an adept of the "subject" and of objectivity, Faye also aims his arrows at Jacques Derrida, who, according to Faye, let himself be "deceived" by Heidegger, contributing, in fact, to spreading his poison.[41]

The two extreme positions – of Fédier and Faye – have a great deal in common; each aspires to impose the alternative of a pro or con onto a very complex issue. On the one hand, there is the

idolized philosopher who seems to have gone through the months of his rectorate at the University of Freiburg undamaged and to have emerged untouched by historical events; on the other hand, Heidegger's image, but also his philosophy, tainted by Nazism, are criminalized *ante litteram*.

This kind of "trial," which still seems to be taking place outside of the French context as well, is crude and unacceptable. What is the point of putting Heidegger on trial? And who would be the plaintiffs? Or is this staged case nothing more than a sleight of hand that seeks to avoid the responsibility of thinking about the real issue?

8 A Calling to Account?

Given that anti-Semitism is at the heart of a commitment to Nazism, and therefore represents a point of no return, the *Black Notebooks* could provide the pretext for closing the door on Heidegger once and for all. This is the hope – and not even a very secret one – of Heidegger's old and new accusers, but also of liberal critics, inveterate analysts, and right-thinking people of every sort. The success of Faye's book has already decreed their revenge. But, on the other hand, hadn't they already denounced that philosophy? So it seems that the moment has arrived to say a definitive "goodbye, Heidegger." A mediocre revanchism and a strong reactionary impulse feed the spasmodic desire to discredit Heidegger, banishing him from every democratic country.

It is clear that the final attack on Heidegger would also be a calling to account of that "continental" philosophy which, although it is delimited by a questionable geopolitical adjective, has for quite some time found refuge and new outcomes in North American and South American universities as well as those of other continents. It is no coincidence that Faye's book was published a year after the death of Derrida, in 2004, during a period when many leading thinkers directly inspired by Heidegger were coming onto the scene. At a close glance, we can see that these represent the most prominent political trends and the most engaged philosophers – Foucault, Lacoue-Labarthe, Derrida, Agamben, to name just a few. Those who violently attack Heidegger aim not least at discrediting and undermining the recent chapter in the history of philosophy –

anything but closed – that came out of the intense relationship between conceptual work and revolutionary politics.

But liberating oneself from Heidegger would also mean avoiding the difficult questions that he raised; it would be a return to the landscape of modernity, clarified by light, reassured by faith in progress, by an unlimited faith in science. As if nothing had happened. And as if it were possible to harmonize that late modernity with the current globalized world.

9 From Derrida to Schürmann: Toward an Anarchic Reading

Although the most extreme stances toward Heidegger are those that have caused the greatest stir, the debate among philosophers about Heidegger and Nazism has unfolded in a fragmentary and unorganic way that has therefore drawn less attention. But upon closer examination, there have been almost no exponents of continental philosophy, except for Heidegger's direct students, who have not made a pronouncement about the issue. To get an overall view, it is helpful to summarize seven different positions and outline them in broad strokes, choosing not the criterion of chronology, but rather that of content.[42] Obviously, the distinctions between the various positions are not always clear-cut, and the positions sometimes overlap.

Hannah Arendt inaugurated the first position in her famous 1969 essay "Martin Heidegger at Eighty," in which she suggested a comparison of Heidegger with Plato and the various voyages that he took to Syracuse. According to Arendt, Heidegger, like Plato, "succumbed to the temptation to change his 'residence' and to get involved in the world of human affairs."[43] In this sense, Heidegger is seen as the last of a great line of philosophers – "Plato as Heidegger."

For that matter, "the attraction to the tyrannical can be demonstrated theoretically in many of the great thinkers."[44] Not without indulgence, Arendt speaks about a "false step," and proposes a separation between Heidegger the individual and his work.

"Back from Syracuse?" is the title of an article published in 1988

by Hans-Georg Gadamer, who also defended Heidegger, focusing again on the incompetence of philosophers who struggle with politics.[45] For Richard Rorty, Heidegger was an "exemplary, gigantic, unforgettable figure," one of those philosophers who are "at best vapid, and at worst sadistic" when they attempt to say their piece about politics.[46]

Then there is the position of those who, for various motives, maintain that there should be a separation between politics and philosophy – more complex on account of the implications that derive from them; these are the writers who deny any connection between Heidegger's philosophy and Nazism. According to this position, Heidegger's involvement with the National Socialist movement can be circumscribed within the brief period of his rectorate at Freiburg University, where it purportedly originated from a misunderstanding that quickly faded. In effect, this was Heidegger's own thesis when, shortly after the defeat of the Germans in 1945, he wrote a self-defense that has only recently been published, in which he referred to a "private vision of National Socialism."[47] This thesis is shared by many more followers of Heidegger than one might imagine, and, with different nuances, it also finds an echo in other positions as well.[48] In the sense indicated by Heidegger, therefore, the contrast between the ideology of the Nazis and Heidegger's own views can be seen as even greater, and a sort of opposition – an internal resistance to the ideology of the Nazis – can be seen in his philosophy. This is the interpretive line followed by Otto Pöggeler in numerous essays.[49]

Situated at the opposite pole is Theodor W. Adorno, for whom Heidegger's philosophy is "fascist to its innermost cells."[50] For Adorno, any attempt to liberate Heidegger from that fatal involvement would be in vain; rather, he believed that it should be recognized that when Heidegger the philosopher spoke, so did Heidegger the Nazi. This is what first Farías and later Faye have attempted to demonstrate. Paradoxically, for opposite motives, this equating of Heidegger the philosopher and Heidegger the Nazi sympathizer has also been embraced by Ernst Nolte, for whom Heidegger would have "inevitably kept struggling to defend Europe, united around Germany, against the squalid folly of the two giant continental powers," Bolshevism and Americanism.[51]

For anyone disposed to admit neither that there was a total

concurrence nor that there was a complete separation between Heidegger's philosophy and Nazism, the interpretive problems multiply with regard not only to his registration in the Nazi party in 1933, but also to the reflections that can be discerned in his work. It is precisely in this context that the place of individual philosophers amid the currents of contemporary thought clearly looms.

For a long time, the prevailing position in Germany was the one espoused by those who saw in Heidegger's involvement with the Nazi party and the events of the 1930s the fatal result of his farewell to the "subject." If, in *Being and Time*, the "responsible self" still retained traces of subjectivity, subsequently – wrote Ernst Tugendhat – the "turn" in Heidegger's thought, understood as a "radical distancing from the philosophy of 'subjectivity,' occurred at the expense of reference to truth and responsibility."[52] A similar criticism was developed by Jürgen Habermas, who, in an article published in 1953, "Mit Heidegger gegen Heidegger denken," pointed an accusatory finger at the genial but ambiguous reversal of modernity that characterized the turning point in Heidegger's thinking.[53] In Habermas' view, Heidegger's early writings are distinguished from those of his Nazi period, which are instead grouped together with his late work. If "in *Being and Time*, Heidegger does not construct intersubjectivity any differently than Husserl," his error emerged later in the process of "subject-centered reason."[54] Thus, there was a growing preoccupation with at least saving the twentieth-century masterpiece *Being and Time* from the accusations that were being leveled against Heidegger and that, especially beginning in the 1980s, threatened to cast a shadow on all of German philosophy.

In this way a selective reading of Heidegger began to be legitimized, outside of Europe as well; this reading made it possible to select – not especially carefully – certain texts rather than others. This approach also had the advantage of making it easy to put a particular spin on the "error" of Heidegger's political involvement. If this position often remains implicit, it has, however, at times, been made explicit. George Steiner, emphasizing the indomitable contradictoriness of Heidegger's work, advocates a free approach to reading Heidegger.[55]

But the demand of those who, albeit with differing motivations, insist upon an internal connection, is just the opposite. According to this view, *Being and Time* has a strong continuity with Heidegger's subsequent writings, and cannot be considered separately from his political commitment. As Tom Rockmore observes, "It is a matter of record that Heidegger, the philosopher of Being, did turn to Nazi politics."[56] But this more integral (or integralistic?) approach comes up against many difficulties, not the least of which is the choice of the criterion that permits a unitary reading of Heidegger's works. Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, for example, identify this as a "radical criticism of modernity."[57]

A seventh position is the one around which a great deal of continental philosophy in its different trends has clustered. Without straightening out the twists and turns in Heidegger's thinking, this position attempts to maintain a thread of continuity between *Being and Time*, Heidegger's writings of the 1930s, and his last phase. In this view, Heidegger's political commitment cannot be placed in parentheses, because it is strictly linked to his philosophy. And there's more: according to this seventh position, Nazism can be understood only through Heidegger. This is the thesis put forward by Lacoue-Labarthe in 1987.[58] Philosophers like these gave a new reading to Heidegger's *Letter on "Humanism,"* and examined with growing interest his essay "The Question Concerning Technology."[59] It was time to reflect on "what happened," as Lyotard wrote in his farsighted 1988 book *Heidegger and the "Jews."*[60] Derrida opened a new interpretive path, and, in his book *Of Spirit*, first published in French in 1987, he deconstructed Heidegger's philosophy, pointing out its metaphysical residue.[61] Unlike Habermas, and those who see the cause of Heidegger's drift toward Nazism in his abandonment of the subject, Derrida finds in the remnants of that metaphysical "subject" a limit, a destruction that was never fully carried out.

Heidegger wasn't sufficiently radical for the more recent exponents of continental philosophy. And, in a reversal, they proposed the possibility of reading him backward: beginning, so to speak, at the end – Heidegger's last writings – in order to destroy the *arché* – the beginning, or the mirage of the beginning. This is the anarchical reading followed by Reiner Schürmann. If one

begins with *Being and Time*, Heidegger's early writings become "the framework that his political speeches would only have had to fill out as rallying cries to a leader capable of walking alone and resorting to violence."62 When read in reverse order, Heidegger appears in a different light. "The hermeneutic dilemma" – Schürmann observes – "is noteworthy here." Those who proceed from the beginning impose an idealized unity on Heidegger's works. For those who take the backwards route, the topology of Heidegger's work is presented within a plural scope.

> Instead of a unitary concept of ground, we then have the "fourfold"; instead of praise for the firm will, detachment; instead of the integration of the university into the civil service, protests against technology and cybernetics; instead of a straightforward identification between Führer and right, anarchy.63

10 Taming Heidegger

The publication of the *Black Notebooks* again brings up, in a more acute form, the interpretive problems that had already emerged in the past. The volumes published in German as of this writing date from the 1930s and 1940s – precisely the period that some people would like to put between parentheses, but that instead is enriched and deepened with the release of these writings. Certainly, it would be simpler and more reassuring to pass directly from *Being and Time* to the *Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking*. This would, among other things, make it possible to return, without too many traumas, to the Heidegger of phenomenology and his studies of the pre-Socratic philosophers and Aristotle. When the various phases of Heidegger's thinking multiply – no longer are there only three phases, with the turning point in his thinking seen as a sort of caesura, but perhaps four phases – some writers are tempted to break the thread of continuity.64

The attempt to fragment Heidegger's work and to legitimize a partial usage of it is the way that is most in vogue today for "taming" Heidegger and making of him an innocuous phenomenologist. What is at stake is no longer only *Being and Time*. According to this view, given that Heidegger's

philosophically irrelevant political error is not circumscribed within a brief extemporaneous text on the autonomy of the university, but rather is claimed by the author in more than 1,000 pages, there remains nothing but to save Heidegger from himself, disparaging and obfuscating not only the *Black Notebooks*, but also all of Heidegger's production from that period. What is really disturbing is the Heidegger of the 1930s.

This taming of Heidegger is nothing more than an alternative – perhaps a more sophisticated one – to the excommunication that has loomed over the philosopher for a long time. In fact, it replicates the already-attempted gesture to censor Heidegger, which at this point takes on striking, definitive tones. If Heidegger cannot be excommunicated, banned from the field of philosophy, at least an attempt can be made to single out the *Black Notebooks*, branding them as a marginal work – on the margins of philosophy – and indeed stigmatizing them as anti-philosophy. But it is precisely this gesture of censorship that is not at all philosophical, above all because there is no explanation of the criterion for excluding the pages of the *Black Notebooks* – and not, for example, the *Introduction to Metaphysics*, which dates from the same time. Didn't Heidegger himself point out that the truth of philosophy is sought along twisting paths, sometimes leading to dead ends? But what is most irritating in this process of attempting to tame Heidegger is the moralistic accent that emerges in judgments like "revolting," "ridiculous," and "pathological." Beyond moralism, it clearly emerges that, when all is said and done, "taming" Heidegger means avoiding having to deal with him. To quote an adage of Paul Valéry that Heidegger often invoked: "Those who cannot attack the thought, instead attack the thinker."[65]

11 The Exclusion of Nazism from Philosophy

It is easy and reckless to define Heidegger's reflection on the "political pathologies" of his epoch as "pathological." In this way, it is insinuated that the work of hermeneutics should be limited to a diagnosis to be entrusted to psychoanalysts or, perhaps, to historians and sociologists. So much so that the *Black Notebooks* would seem to be distant from the territory of Reason. After all,

weren't they written during the great "insanity" that was Nazism?

Rather, psychoanalysis should be evoked to cast light on a self-defense used by many philosophers, if it weren't that the theme has an eminently philosophical relevance. To speak of the "insanity of Nazism" is a way to reject what happened, placing it outside of reason and outside of history; but at the same time, it is also a way to exclude it from philosophy. From what extra-historical position could such a diagnosis be pronounced?

Nazism was a political program. What's more, it was not so much an ideological *Weltanschauung* as it was, for all intents and purposes, a philosophy. Emmanuel Levinas understood this clearly when, in 1935, he wrote his essay "Reflections on the Philosophy of Hitlerism," which remains essential reading on this topic.66 But, apart from a few rare exceptions, later writers have not followed in Levinas' footsteps.

Above all in Germany, the exclusion of Nazism from the context of philosophy has been striking. Certainly, one cannot forget the criticism of Adorno, who on the basis of Marxist or para-Marxist presuppositions reduced Nazism to fascism; or the analysis of Habermas, more committed to denouncement than to an analysis of the onto-historical dimension of National Socialism. So, who today is thinking *philosophically* about "what happened" – and not only the Third Reich, nor only Auschwitz, but the whole "Jewish question" in Western philosophy?

The exclusion of these themes that have been expunged, albeit tacitly, because they are believed to be "not philosophical," seems to be a mostly German phenomenon.67 More justifiable years ago, now less comprehensible, in a scholarly sphere this exclusion finds confirmation and support on one side in the strong presence of trends of analytical philosophy and the theory of science, which are notoriously not interested in history and what happened in the past, and, on the other side, by a brand of philosophy that is preoccupied with presenting itself as expurgated from its own past "sins" and with being accepted either as solid philological-philosophical research or as phenomenology.

All of this cannot help but have an effect on the critical analysis of Heidegger, which has been at an impasse for some time. Is he the great teacher of Germany, the pastor of Being? Is he an incarnation

of the malignant spirit of Nazism? Why should the philosophers of the twenty-first century have to have anything more to do with this phantasm?

The question, however, could be a different one, overturning the usual perspective. Are some philosophers attempting to elude this confrontation, judging Heidegger's reflections of the 1930s and 1940s to be incoherent ravings, in order not to have to look the Gorgon in the face? The attempt to define the *Black Notebooks* as philosophically irrelevant betrays such a refusal to face the facts.

The publication of the *Black Notebooks*, which Heidegger had planned for and wanted to occur, should be taken with due seriousness and gravity. Perhaps it represents an opportunity to finally dare to take the theoretical step that up to now has not been achieved – to confront National Socialism and the version of it that was given by Heidegger within the history of Being.

12 Philosophical Commitment and Political Decision

Hasn't the time perhaps come to follow all the way to its most radical depths an idea that unfolds, along the thread of history, faithful to an ontological-destinal program that urges us to seek a new beginning?

The refusal to do this is connected with the tendentially apolitical inclination found both in analytical approaches and in phenomenology. But it also derives from an interpretive strategy that, precisely in the case of Heidegger, has become increasingly consolidated, to the point that it has reached a certain obviousness. The portrait of the philosopher upon his return from Syracuse painted by Arendt and taken up by many after her, besides suggesting a very questionable comparison with Plato (not to mention the comparison of Hitler with the Greek tyrant Dionysius of Syracuse), and passing off Heidegger's adherence to Nazism as a political mistake, re-proposes the stereotype of the politically incompetent philosopher.[68] In short, according to this view, when philosophers have gotten it into their heads to realize their ideas, they have done nothing more than cause damage.

This liberal-popular stereotype, which is an invitation to take an

indulgent, benevolent viewpoint, carries with it a not very edifying concept both of philosophy and of politics, the one tendentially abstract and rigid, the other facile and ready to compromise. Seen in this way, the syntagma "political philosophy" appears to be an explosive oxymoron.[69]

In the case of Heidegger, this has had particularly deleterious repercussions, because it has confined the discussion to the dualism between philosophy and politics, with the result of throwing the debate off track. Heidegger's "mistake," limited to political praxis, has been compared to that of many other philosophers. There is no lack of examples. Indeed, what about Aristotle, for whom slaves were not human beings? And Rousseau, who packed his children off to an orphanage? The misdeeds of these two philosophers do not invalidate their work, nor do they prevent people from reading Aristotle's *Politics* or Rousseau's *Émile*. Philosophers can make mistakes, as can all other human beings.

The difficulty in crossing the threshold, and in following Heidegger's political thinking as it evolved and as he took missteps, is not, however, to be found in the pages of his works, but rather in that widespread certainty, also shared by philosophy, that liberalism is the ultimate horizon.[70] If this point of view is assumed, then Heidegger's reflections cannot appear as anything but irritating ravings. And in this way, the revolutionary power of his philosophy is diminished.

The *Black Notebooks* open a new chapter because, first and foremost, they show that Heidegger's "mistake" was really a commitment that, as such, had a political *and* a philosophical dimension. If active politics is to be distinguished from conceptual philosophy, and if philosophy cannot be mistaken when it attempts to grasp the reality of its time in the form of concepts, nevertheless the "Heidegger affair" cannot be clarified, as has long been attempted, in the gap between politics and philosophy. Heidegger's philosophical commitment precedes any political decision. It is therefore in the realm of philosophy that the case should be discussed. Philosophy itself is called directly into question.

Notes

1. Benedictus de Spinoza, "Ethics," in *Complete Works*, trans. Samuel Shirley, ed. Michael L. Morgan (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2002), 348.

2. André Glucksmann, "La non-repentance de Martin Heidegger," in *Les deux chemins de la philosophie* (Paris: Plon, 2009), 38–9.

3. See the discussion between Alphonse de Waelhens, "La philosophie de Heidegger et le nazisme," *Les Temps Modernes* 3 (1947): 115–27, and Karl Löwith, "Réponse à M. de Waelhens," *Les Temps Modernes* 35 (1948): 374–7.

4. Jennifer Schuessler, "Heidegger's Notebooks Renew Focus on Anti-Semitism," *New York Times*, March 30, 2014.

5. Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu, ed. John Sallis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 125ff.

6. Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger, *Letters 1925–1975*, trans. Andrew Shields, ed. Ursula Ludz (New York: Harcourt, 2004), 75.

7. Heidegger, "Was is die 'Zeit?'" in *Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens: 1910–1976*, Gesamtausgabe (GA) 13 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2002), 131.

8. See Hugo Ott, *Martin Heidegger: A Political Life*, trans. Alan Blunden (Hammersmith: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993).

9. Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, trans. Robert D. Metcalf and Mark B. Tanzer (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 4. See also Franco Volpi, "Vita e opera," in *Guida a Heidegger: ermeneutica, fenomenologia, esistenzialismo, ontologia, teologia, estetica, etica, tecnica, nichilismo*, ed. Franco Volpi et al. (Rome: Laterza, 1997), 35ff. Subsequently, Volpi took an increasingly critical position, as seen in particular in his essay

"Contributi alla filosofia. Dall'evento," in *La selvaggia chiarezza: Scritti su Heidegger*, with a note by Antonio Gnoli (Milan: Adelphi, 2011), 267–9.

10. See Otto Pöggeler, *The Paths of Heidegger's Life and Thought* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 1998), 135–85.

11. Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers, *The Heidegger–Jaspers Correspondence (1920–1963)*, trans. Gary E. Aylesworth, ed. Walter Biemel and Hans Saner (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2003), 120.

12. Ibid., 208–12.

13. A whole volume resulted from this: James C. Klagge, ed., *Wittgenstein: Biography and Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 2001).

14. Ludwig Wittgenstein and Peter Winch, *Culture and Value*, ed. G. H. Von Wright and Heikki Nyman (University of Chicago Press, 1980), 16.

15. Gottlob Frege, "Thoughts," in *Logical Investigations*, trans. Peter T. Geach and Robert H. Stoothoff (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 1–30; 17: "A third realm must be recognized."

16. Richard L. Mendelsohn, "Diary: Written by Professor Dr. Gottlob Frege in the Time from 10 March to 9 April 1924," ed. Gottfried Gabriel and Wolfgang Kienzler, *Inquiry* (December 1996): 336.

17. Ibid., 330–1.

18. Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), §3, 8.

19. Hadrien France-Lanord, "Antisemitisme," in *Le dictionnaire Martin Heidegger: vocabulaire polyphonique de sa pensée*, ed. P. Arjakovsky, F. Fédier, and H. France-Lanord (Paris: Cerf, 2013), 84–90.

20. Bernd Martin, “Martin Heidegger und Der Nationalsozialismus,” in *Martin Heidegger und das “Dritte Reich”: Ein Kompendium*, ed. Martin Bernd (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1989), 14–50.

21. Richard Wolin, *Heidegger’s Children: Hannah Arendt, Karl Löwith, Hans Jonas, and Herbert Marcuse* (Princeton University Press, 2005).

22. Hans Jonas, *Mémoires*, trans. Krishna K. Winston, ed. Christian Weise (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2008), 68.

23. Rüdiger Safranski, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 254.

24. Ibid., 256–9.

25. The expression “competition anti-Semitism” was coined by Haffner to denounce this phenomenon. See Sebastian Haffner, *The Meaning of Hitler*, trans. Ewald Osers (London: Phoenix, 2003), 91.

26. Holger Zaborowski, “War Heidegger Antisemit? Zu einer Kontroversen,” in *Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus: Interpretationen*, ed. Alfred Denker and Holger Zaborowski, *Heidegger-Jahrbuch* 5 (Freiburg and Munich: Verlag Karl Alber, 2009), 242–67.

27. Ibid., 261. For the correspondence between Heidegger and his wife, see Heidegger, *Letters to His Wife, 1915–1970*, ed. Gertrud Heidegger (Cambridge: Polity, 2008).

28. See Pierre Aubenque, “Encore Heidegger et le nazisme,” *Le Débat* 48 (1988): 113–23; Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward S. Robinson (New York: HarperPerennial / Modern Thought, 2008), 163–8.

29. Jeanne Hersch, “Les enjeux du débat autour de Heidegger,” *Commentaire* 42 (1988): 474–9.

30. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV: Black Notebooks 1939–*

1941, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), §120, 191.

31. Peter Trawny, "Editor's Afterword," in ibid., 221ff.

32. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI: Black Notebooks 1938–1939*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 214.

33. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI: Black Notebooks 1931–1938*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), xi.

34. Jean Beaufret, *Le chemin de Heidegger: dialogue avec Heidegger IV* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1985); Víctor Farías, *Heidegger and Nazism*, trans. Joseph Margolis and Tom Rockmore (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989); François Fédier, *Heidegger: anatomie d'un scandale* (Paris: Laffont, 1988).

35. Emmanuel Faye, *Heidegger: The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy in Light of the Unpublished Seminars of 1933–1935*, trans. Michael B. Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

36. Ibid., 319.

37. Ibid., 316.

38. Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (University of Chicago Press, 1953), 42.

39. Faye wrote a 20-page article only on the basis of hearsay, without having read the *Black Notebooks* and therefore without ever citing them: Emmanuel Faye, "La vision du monde antisémite de Heidegger à l'ombre de ses Cahiers noirs," in *Heidegger, le sol, la communauté, la race*, ed. Faye (Paris: Beauchesne, 2014), 307–27.

40. The paradox of this accusation would subsequently emerge. See chapter II below.

41. Faye, *Heidegger*, 95, 171, 292. See also Jacques Derrida, *The*

Politics of Friendship, trans. George Collins (London and New York: Verso, 2005), 168ff. On the unproductive dimension of the “trial” against Heidegger, see Alain Badiou and Barbara Cassin, *Heidegger: His Life & His Philosophy*, trans. Susan Spitzer (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 32ff.

42. For a discussion of the criteria and the various positions on Heidegger and Nazism, see Dieter Thöma, *Die Zeit des Selbst und die Zeit danach: Zur Kritik der Textgeschichte Martin Heideggers, 1910–1976* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1990), 474ff.; and Tom Rockmore, *On Heidegger's Nazism and Philosophy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 282ff.

43. Hanna Arendt, “Martin Heidegger at Eighty,” trans. Albert Hofstadter, *New York Review of Books*, October 21, 1971, 53.

44. Ibid.

45. Hans-Georg Gadamer and John McCumber, “Back from Syracuse?” *Critical Inquiry* 15, 2 (1989): 427–30; Hans-Georg Gadamer, “Superficiality and Ignorance,” in *Martin Heidegger and National Socialism: Questions and Answers*, trans. Lisa Harries, ed. Günther Neske and Emil Kettering (New York: Paragon House, 1990), 141–4; Hans-Georg Gadamer, “On the Political Incompetence of Philosophy,” *Diogenes* 46, 182 (1998): 3–11.

46. Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 118, 120.

47. Heidegger, “The Rectorate 1933–1934: Facts and Thoughts,” in *Martin Heidegger and National Socialism*, ed. Neske and Kettering, 20.

48. In addition to Fédier, we should also reference Julian Young, *Heidegger, Philosophy, Nazism* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 6ff.

49. Otto Pöggeler, *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking*, trans. Daniel Magurshak and Sigmund J. Barber (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1989); and Otto Pöggeler, *Philosophie und Politik bei Heidegger* (Freiburg: K. Alber, 1972).

50. Theodor Adorno, *Musikalische Schriften*, in *Gesamelte Werke*, vol. XIX (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1976), 637; cited in David Sherman, *Sartre and Adorno: The Dialectics of Subjectivity* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 46.

51. Ernst Nolte, *Martin Heidegger*: *Politik und Geschichte im Leben und Denken* (Berlin: Propyläen, 1992), 182.

52. Ernst Tugendhat, *Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1967), 385ff.

53. Jürgen Habermas, "Martin Heidegger: On the Publication of the Lectures of 1935," *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 6, 2 (1977): 155–80.

54. Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, trans. Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: Polity, 1990), 150, 133.

55. George Steiner, *Heidegger* (University of Chicago Press, 1991), 4ff.

56. Rockmore, *On Heidegger's Nazism and Philosophy*, 72.

57. Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, *Heidegger and Modernity*, trans. Franklin Philip (University of Chicago Press, 1990), 79.

58. Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger and the Politics of Poetry*, trans. Jeff Fort (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007).

59. See also Gianni Vattimo, *The Adventure of Difference: Philosophy after Nietzsche and Heidegger*, trans. Cyprian Blamires (Cambridge: Polity, 1993).

60. Jean-François Lyotard, *Heidegger and "the Jews,"* trans. Andreas Michel and Mark S. Roberts (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990).

61. Jacques Derrida, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (University of Chicago Press, 1989).

62. Reiner Schürmann, *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy*, trans. Christine-Marie Gros (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 13–14.

63. Ibid., 14.

64. Hans-Georg Gadamer, already perceiving this risk, had spoken about many ways, but a single path: "Martin Heidegger's 'One Path,'" in *Reading Heidegger from the Start: Essays in His Earliest Thought*, trans. P. Christopher Smith, ed. Theodore J. Kisiel and John van Buren (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 19–35.

65. Paul Valéry, "Autres Rhumbs," in *Tel quel: Oeuvres II* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960), 685.

66. Emmanuel Levinas, "Reflections on the Philosophy of Hitlerism," trans. Séan Hand, *Critical Inquiry* 17, 1 (1990): 62–71.

67. There are, however, some contrary examples, such as the book by Reinhold Aschenberg, *Ent-Subjektivierung des Menschen: Lager und Shoah in philosophicher Reflexion* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Naumann, 2003).

68. Arendt, "Martin Heidegger at Eighty," 53.

69. On this topic, see Miguel Abensour, *Hannah Arendt contre la philosophie politique?* (Paris: Sens & Tonka, 2006).

70. Slavoj Zizek, *In Defense of Lost Causes* (London: Verso, 2008), 147.

II
PHILOSOPHY AND HATRED OF THE JEWS

> . . . because the Jew, you know, what does he have that truly belongs to him, that hasn't been borrowed, borrowed and never returned?[1]

1 Luther, Augustine, and "the Jews and Their Lies"

On April 29, 1946, the specter of Luther hovered over the defendants at the international court in Nuremberg. It was Julius Streicher, the editor of the Nazi journal *Der Stürmer*, who brought up Luther's name. When his lawyer asked him if there had been other attacks by the press against the Jews, Streicher replied: "Dr. Martin Luther would very probably sit in my place in the defendants' dock today."[2]

Anti-Semitism had been part of the German tradition for centuries, so it seemed legitimate to trace it back to Martin Luther. Luther, the voice of protest against Rome, the modern advocate of inner freedom, the genius at crafting language, the very symbol of the German identity, was the first to call for the destruction of the Jews. After the explosion of interest in the 1920s for Luther's *Judenschriften*, his writings against the Jews, the Nazi regime didn't hesitate to make propagandistic use of him. From Luther to Hitler, the German nation presented a solid, united front in fulfilling its own destiny, which, aiming at the establishment of a total state, presaged Hitler's drastic, definitive solution to the Jewish question.

But how did Luther revive the age-old Christian verdicts against the Jews? And what was the turning point that his theology announced? Luther did not have direct relationships with Jews. In his time, the Jews, accused of poisoning the Christians' wells, had already been expelled from the entire state of Thuringia after the Black Death. All that remained of the Jews was the trace of some names, and an altered memory. Excluded from the human community, the Jews were condemned to the bestial image of the

Judensau, the sow as sculpted in the church at Wittenberg. Luther described the "Jews' sow," taking inspiration from this very image in one of his most violent writings against the Jews, *Vom Schem Hamphoras* of 1543.[3]

Yet biblical exegesis had led Luther to an intense relationship with Judaism and, not least, with the Hebrew language. Luther's call to return to the Scriptures, which would contribute to his dramatic break with the Roman Catholic Church, resounded loudly and clearly. But for Luther, as for other reformers, the interpretation of the Scriptures could not be limited to the grammar of the Hebrew language; the letter had to be spiritualized in the quest for a prophetic announcement. From the psalms to the books of the Old Testament, this was the path to deciphering the Christian message in the Hebrew words of the Scriptures. Thus, there re-emerged the antithesis between flesh and spirit that had marked the polarization between Jews and Christians. During the Protestant Reformation, the antithesis was intensified by the primacy that the Protestants conferred upon the interior life and their disdain for everything that was exterior – rituals, ceremonies, excessive adherence to laws. If the immediate target of the spirit of the Reformation were the Catholics, the ultimate target were the Jews, who were rejected as being on the ruinous edge of a purely fleshly exteriority.

This is the background against which Luther's theological revolt took place; what had changed was the way of looking at the Jews from an eschatological perspective. While Augustine had employed many anti-Jewish stereotypes, he still held out the possibility of salvation for Israel by finding at the same time a solution to its mystery, to the persistence of the Synagogue *after* the founding of the Church. Having stained themselves with the worst possible crime – deicide – according to Augustine, the Jews had been spared in order to bear witness to heretics and pagans about the historical truth of Christianity. Blind to the truth, the Jews would convert to Christianity at the end of days. Thus, they should be protected during the apocalyptic period of waiting for their conversion "in fine mundi."[4]

For Luther, the guilt of the Jews was not limited to the crucifixion of Christ; rather, it was perennial and indelible. For him, these living witnesses of the historical Jesus, in whom they nevertheless

refused to recognize the Christ of the Christians, obstinately continued to repeat their paradoxical error. Their impiety left no hope for a final conversion; Luther denied their presence at the end of days.

According to Luther, the Jews – the people of God according to the flesh – should be replaced by the people of God according to the spirit. There could be no clemency for them. Luther considered the Jews to be the true enemies of the "spiritual Church" that he intended to build. The wrath of God would be wreaked upon them.

The millenarian anxiety that was shaking Christian Europe to its foundations during those years immediately following the discovery of the new continent had spread the conviction that the end of days had already begun. The religious unification of the world seemed imminent. The populations of the distant lands of the Occident were embracing the Gospel one after the other. A new sense of impatience with the Jews arose; their obstinacy seemed scandalous, but their conversion would have been the indubitable sign of the end of the world. Should their books be destroyed? Should the Talmud be burned? Should the Spanish model of the implacable choice between forced baptism and exile be followed?

Luther's attitude was ambivalent. He did not share the violent approach to conversion. In 1523 he published *That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew*, a work pervaded by the longing for a return to the Gospels.5 He had hoped that the Jews in turn would follow that path, joining the Christians who had chosen to return to the authentic doctrine of the Scriptures. So his disillusionment was all the more bitter. And bitterness marked Luther's "theology of the cross" during his last years.

The Reformation had had surprising effects. Not only had the Jews not converted; the rupture within the Christian world and the rediscovery of the Jewish roots of Christianity seemed to attest to a sort of success on the part of Judaism – to the point that the Jews waiting for the Messiah seemed to derail the Christian apocalypse and give rise to earthly efforts toward political emancipation. In Moravia, the sect of the Sabbatarians decided to abolish Sunday as the day of worship, returning to the Jewish Sabbath.

Luther vented his ire above all in the pamphlet *On the Jews and Their Lies* of 1543. An extreme violence inspired his accusations and invectives, instilled hatred and suspicion, dictated abuse and insults, and even suggested concrete measures for liberation once and for all from that "damned" people. For him, the Jews had become internal enemies, animated by an inextinguishable hatred; they were "full of conceit, envy, usury, greed, and all sorts of malice," "blind" and "consigned to the wrath of God," "thirsty bloodhounds and murderers of all Christendom," "stubborn, evil, disobedient people," "false bastards and outsiders," "liars, blasphemers." Their Messiah could be expected to "murder and kill the entire world with his sword." Although they had been "cast out, dispersed, and utterly rejected [. . .] they still hope to return" to their land; and yet "they live among us, enjoy our shield and protection, they use our country and our highways, our markets and streets." But "the Jews, who are exiles, should really have nothing, and whatever they have must surely be our property."[6] A Jew is not a *Deutscher* but a *Teutscher* – not a "German" but a "deceiver"; not a *Welscher*, but a *Felscher* – not a "foreigner" but a "falsifier"; not a *Bürger*, but a *Würger* – not a "citizen," but a "swindler."[7]

The accusation of the Jews being liars, which would evolve in multiple ways, was nevertheless not immediately clear. In what sense did the Jews lie? And why? The answer was to be sought in hermeneutics, and in Luther's principle of *sola Scriptura* ("only Scripture"): nothing except the Bible itself was required for a reading of the Bible. But the Jews had "falsified" the Scriptures with their "mendacious glosses"; they "interpret and distort almost every word." They did nothing but "take any verse [of the Bible] which we Christians apply to our Messiah and violate it, tear it to bits, crucify it." Their exegesis was therefore a crucifixion that was continually renewed, giving rise to different meanings, so as never to "arrive at any definite meaning."[8] For Luther, the lie of the Jews was, therefore, the reading of the Torah, kept infinitely open to Talmudic questioning. Luther countered this type of hermeneutics, which was not subject to closure, with his own truth, based on a single, unquestionable meaning derived from a one-to-one reading of the Bible.

In this way, Luther maintained that he was unmasking the Jews'

imposture, their "impious" and "shameful" lies that were refuted by the Scriptures themselves. For Luther, the most serious lie was the "boasting" of the Jews that they were the chosen people, having been born of the highest "race [*Stamm*] and lineage" on earth.[9] From exegesis, from the Jews' way of interpreting texts, Luther's accusation of the Jews' lying extended, targeting the very content of the Scriptures. The "boasting" of the Jews should be rejected, because in the book of Genesis it is said that "you are dust and ashes," which means that everyone is equal and that "there is no difference whatsoever with regard to birth or flesh and blood."[10] According to Luther, this misunderstanding on the part of the Jews about being God's chosen people – whether deliberate or involuntary – contained *in nuce* the error that would be blamed on the Jewish people several centuries later: that of having introduced the principle of race. It was in his criticism of the Jews' "particularity" that, almost unobserved, Luther passed from an anti-Judaism that was of a more strictly theological nature, to outright anti-Semitism.

Luther opened up a chasm between *jehudim* and *gojim*, between Jews and Gentiles – a chasm that would never be bridged in the German tradition. The impossibility of converting the Jewish people was conjoined with a radical pessimism that left room for the violence of power in the governance of the world. Thence the concrete measures proposed by Luther: "First, to set fire to their synagogues or schools and to bury and cover with dirt whatever will not burn."[11] What is more, Luther advised "that their houses also be razed and destroyed," "all their prayer books and Talmudic writings [. . .] be taken from them," and "safe-conduct on the highways be abolished completely for the Jews."[12] It is no wonder that this "advice" was taken literally during the Nazi period, and that in a specific reference to Luther, the *Judenstern* – the yellow patch in the shape of a star – was imposed upon the Jews.[13]

2 The "Jewish Question" in Philosophy

The hostility of many philosophers toward the Jews has mostly been passed over in silence. This is a dark, disturbing chapter in the history of philosophy that has only begun to receive due attention in recent years, also as a result of the most recent

reflections on the Shoah. Although the conviction that thinking is not the same as acting still remains firm, the question of the legitimacy that philosophers, at times in spite of themselves, have offered to the Final Solution of "the Jewish question" has been raised. The question seems to be aimed at overcoming the taboo according to which philosophical reason could not have conceived the barbarities of the Final Solution, and at causing to emerge a continuity between the pages of several famous works of philosophy and those written by people who derived from those works the consequences for the Final Solution, attempts to read Nazism in the context of the phases of human thought, re-inserting it into history.[14]

What are the philosophical, theological, and political ideas that in the course of decades led to the extermination of the Jews even being thinkable? Why has philosophy not infrequently abdicated common sense, often becoming complicit with and legitimizing hatred? It cannot be surprising, for example, that, after Luther, the accusation of the Jews being "liars," in different forms and modalities, was taken up again by Kant, who called the Jews "masters at telling lies"; by Schopenhauer, who in a famous judgment contained in his *Parerga and Paralipomena* wrote that "the Jews are the great masters of the lie"; and finally re-launched by Nietzsche, who blamed the Jewish people for having introduced the lie of the "moral world order."[15] Hitler, in turn, referring explicitly to this tradition, used the purported mendacity of the Jews as a key for deciphering the arcane nature of Judaism. According to this tradition, it is precisely the accusation that the Jews want to be *what they are not* – to cover and camouflage their non-being, the nothingness upon which they are based – it is precisely this metaphysical imputation that has had such devastating effects.

Judeophobia and hatred of Jews are not characteristics that are exclusive to German thought; traces of them can be found throughout the Western tradition, including the French and Italian ones. In fact, the exceptions are exceedingly rare; among these we should remember the name of Giambattista Vico.

Nevertheless, there were multiple motives that converged in Germany to give rise to a constellation that did not take shape elsewhere: the strong influence of Luther, which left traces even in

the German language, and the peculiar "spirit" of Lutheranism, with the primacy of interiority, and the imperative of unconditional obedience, not to mention the rise of a type of heroic morality that found its fulfillment in absolute duty and that even went so far as to justify submission to tyranny. Geographically central, and yet devoid of a guiding role within the European context, split and divided, backward and antiquated, almost atonic, Germany was desperately seeking an identity that it did not have in the present and could not find in the past, except in the obscure myth of "German blood" that since the Middle Ages had been the inexhaustible source of apocalyptic fantasies, Manichean heresies, aspirations to rule the world, and savage incitements to violence.[16]

This myth, which remained underground and agitated the most recondite depths of the German spirit, was tempered and seemed almost to dissolve during the moderate and cosmopolitan *Aufklärung*, the German Enlightenment. This was the time of Lessing, whose famous drama *Nathan the Wise* elevated Jews to a symbol of the struggle against prejudice; many believe that they recognize in the protagonist of the play a portrait of Lessing's friend the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn. The fecund, tormented Jewish-German symbiosis was made possible by the strong Jewish presence in Germany, where, in the large cities, and above all in Berlin, Jews had reached the heights of intellectual life, making decisive contributions to the culture of the Enlightenment.

But the situation very quickly took a downward plunge. Already unequivocal signs had been emerging in Enlightenment France. Tolerance had shown all of its intolerant traits in Voltaire, whose pamphlet *Juifs* had shown a hostile exasperation toward the Jews.[17] According to Reason, presumed to be universal, the Jews, accused of particularism, were an affront; according to secular morality, which exalts the autonomy of the subject, Judaism was the scandal of enslavement to the law. For all of the forms of interior religiosity, from Deism to pietism, the Jews were seen as the people of legalism and exteriority. Age-old anti-Jewish stereotypes were combined with new forms of anti-Semitism.

What then is "the Jewish question," this formula that is too often allowed to pass without criticism? As Hannah Arendt rightly

observed, “the modern Jewish question dates from the Enlightenment; it was the Enlightenment – that is, the non-Jewish world – that posed the question.”[18] The *Judenfrage* was raised when the Jews were simultaneously considered a question – because Judaism seems to elude definition – as well as a problem to be solved. If the early figures of the Enlightenment, like Lessing or Dohm, seemed to favor emancipation, it was only because they saw in the Jew a human being who, divesting himself of Judaism, could obtain equal rights and become a fellow citizen.[19] Therefore, when the “Jewish question” is spoken of, what is usually meant is the process through which equality was granted to the European Jews; paradoxically, however, behind this formula is hidden the problem of the irreducible otherness of the Jews, which the nations of Europe would confront in different ways and with different outcomes, and which in Germany would lead to the *Endlösung*, the Final Solution.[20]

In the German context, the “Jewish question” was accorded the status of philosophical dignity. For the first time, in a systematic form, and with a deepened conceptual elaboration, philosophers questioned themselves about Jews and Judaism. How, then, can this phenomenon be explained? Why, precisely starting with Kant, and from German idealism, did there begin a reflection that would continue into the twentieth century?

Judaism had attracted the attention of Christian theologians for centuries. There was no lack of famous debates, in the course of which rabbis, philosophers, and erudite Jews had come onto the scene of European intellectual life. From a theological perspective, Judaism appeared to be a religion that was perilously akin to, as well as opposed to, Christianity. Within the rigid scheme of the Enlightenment, it was, like other religions, considered to be a useless superstition from which Reason should emancipate itself.

The scenario changed when the philosophy of history was born. While they were distancing themselves both from a theological vision, which saw history as an unfolding of providential events, and from that unstoppable race toward progress to which the Age of Enlightenment had blindly given in, philosophers began to study the epochs of the world and their meaning. They scrutinized the remote past in order to raise their eyes toward the future; they

attempted to trace an interpretive line through the tangle of human events. They maintained the hermeneutic possibility of understanding even the most distant epochs by means of the affinity that links the reason of the present to the reason of the past. What is more, Reason discovered that it had its own history; it was recognized in the historical forms in which it had been realized, by means of which an increasingly greater clarity – indeed, a self-awareness – could be reached.

In considering the various ages of human history, the role of religions, the peculiarities of populations, and the contribution offered by each one to the spirit of the world, German philosophers pushed themselves even to scrutinize the past of other continents, from India to Persia, to then find the return road through Athens and Rome. But in the process they came up against a people who, no matter how they considered them, seemed to wreak havoc upon the established systematicness of philosophy: the Jews. First of all, the Jews were the only people to have survived from antiquity. Only the vestiges of the civilization of the ancient Greeks remained; the same held true for the Romans. Why, then, did the Jews, who were scattered all over the world, survive? How to explain the persistence of that remnant of antiquity, Israel? And what kind of people were the Jews, who didn't have a nation, or a homeland, except the one from which they had been exiled – who didn't have a state, or even a constitution? Was it even possible to denote as a "people" a group of individuals scattered here and there, not only throughout the nations of Europe, but also across the Atlantic? So, under closer consideration, should Judaism be considered a religion? And what's more, a religion that, superseded by Christianity, no longer had a reason to exist? The Jews were, in fact, the people who had purportedly committed the most serious crime in the history of the world – deicide – because they had not recognized that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah for whom they were waiting. They were obstinately continuing to await their Messiah.

Thus, the Jews seemed to represent a challenge for philosophers, who could not succeed in fitting them into their own conceptual schemas. German philosophy, which aspired to be secular, still maintained close ties with Lutheran theology, from which it had inherited a tenacious Judeophobia.

Precisely during these years, the return to the study of the Scriptures, while eliciting deep interest in the Jews' language and culture, paradoxically provoked a new anti-Jewish hatred. The Christianity of the Reformation – the modern religion of interiority – saw in Judaism the solely exterior aspect of law. It is not surprising that the fiercest enemies of the Jews came from the ranks of the Hebraists, such as Johann David Michaelis.[21] It was in this context that the idea that the Jews are liars was born, because Judaism was not seen as a genuine faith.[22] The Jews were accused of faking.

The philosophers wished that they could unravel the mystery of Judaism. The *Judenfrage*, understood as a philosophical question, should have been decided by establishing whether the Jews could be considered as members of a religious faith, a sort of church; if that were the case, it would be a matter of converting them, or tolerating them as citizens of another faith; or whether instead they belonged to a people. If the latter were the case, the question became more complicated, because it would mean hosting a foreign, undesired people within the German nation. The philosophers posed this question with an eye toward the future of Europe; some were already thinking of a possible German domination of the continent. If the Jews were pretending that Judaism was nothing more than a religion, but in reality they felt themselves to be members of a "Hebrew nation" in exile, then it should perhaps be imagined that they were plotting a conspiracy and that they were aiming to take over Europe before the Germans did.

In a bitter irony that is not unusual in the history of the Jews, the works of Spinoza and Mendelssohn made the question even more intricate. Both Spinoza and Mendelssohn favored emancipation. To this end, Mendelssohn had pushed for a secular state, where the Jews could have been accepted as citizens, while still maintaining respect for Jewish law and ceremonies. In this way, however, he gave rise to the suspicion that that religion, which he himself called "revealed law," was a dangerous theological–political marriage.[23]

Even more ambiguous was the reading that Spinoza gave to Judaism, in which he saw the political foundation of the ancient Hebrews who had entered into a pact with God, recognizing him

as their sovereign. But this "theocracy" that had had no equals was no longer in effect after the exile of the Jews, when they lived scattered under the dominion of foreign nations. Thus, it was not necessary for Jews to observe rites and ceremonies, since for them religion had a political value, and their nation no longer existed. But in Spinoza's view, "law" remained a spectral presence. Spinoza interpreted the "choosing" of the Jews as a political undertaking; he was convinced that God would again choose the Jews to re-establish their political constitution.[24]

The idea of a "Jewish nation" was taken as a threat by the German philosophers, conditioned both by their theological context, which influenced even the most secular philosophers, as well as by the image that they had of Judaism, mediated by Spinoza and Mendelssohn. Thus, the emancipation of the Jews began to be placed in doubt. From Herder to Fichte, albeit with different emphases, Judaism – a strange and foreign religion – became the religion of a foreign nation. The theological stigma was immediately followed by a political stigma. The Jews were seen as a people who had come from elsewhere, from another continent.[25]

In his reflection on the history of humanity, Herder observed that the Jews "have had more influence on other nations than any people of Asia."[26] He interpreted the Jewish diaspora as the event that had made it possible for a "wandering" people who have "never been inspired with an ardent passion for their own honor, for a habitation, for a country of their own," to bring about a situation, even through Christianity, in which "the books of the Jews were introduced to every nation that embraced Christian doctrines."[27]

The powerful affirmation of German nationalism, which found expression above all in the work of Fichte, had two decisive effects: on the one hand, the "Jewish nation" was considered politically as "a state within a state," with all of the consequences that derive from statehood; on the other hand, the condemnation of Judaism also implied an attack on Christianity.[28] In 1793, writing about the French Revolution, Fichte first aired the idea of a Jewish conspiracy:

> In almost all of the countries of Europe there is spreading a powerful state, animated by hostile feelings, a state that finds

> itself continuously at war with all of the other states and that in some states subjects the citizens to terrible oppression: that state is Judaism. I do not believe – and I hope to be able to explain this later – that this situation is so terrible because Judaism forms a state that is separate and kept together by such strong ties, but rather because it is founded upon hatred for the entire human race.[29]

At the same time as he was proclaiming himself a champion of tolerance, Fichte stated that he was against granting civil rights to Jews, and to do this he used the metaphor of a collective decapitation:

> But as far as their civil rights go, I for one do not see any other way than that of cutting off the head of every one of them in one night, and replacing it with another head in which there is not a single Jewish idea. And to protect ourselves from them, I find no other way than to conquer the promised land for them and ship them all off there.[30]

The "promised land" was also metaphorical; by this, Fichte meant an uncertain place, outside the comity of the European nations, and above all outside of the German territory, from which the Jews would ultimately be expelled. The violence with which Fichte spoke explicitly about expulsion of the Jews also had an impact on theological thought: identifying Christianity as the natural religion, Fichte placed in doubt the concept that Jesus was a Jew, and condemned Saint Paul for having "injected" into Christianity elements of Judaism that prepared the way for the "ruin of Christianity."[31] In his *Address to the German Nation*, Fichte accused Christianity, which had "originated in Asia," of having become "properly Asiatic."[32] Here, for the first time, there emerged the disquieting idea of an Aryan Christ; Fichte spoke of an "original Christianity" that was authentic and pure. He justified the right of the Germans to reclaim this original Christianity and their duty to Aryanize it, translating it into a political mission.

3 Kant and the "Euthanasia of Judaism"

In the third landscape described by Kant, the passage illuminated by "the starry heavens above me" that were upheld by the "moral law within me," there was no place for Judaism.[33]

For Kant, reason, in its universality and purity, could not admit primitive prejudices, useless superstitions, or obsolete particularisms. Above all, reason could not bend to external dictates and laws imposed by others. The subject that Kant introduced into modernity is a sovereign, free, autonomous subject. It relies solely on reason.

This also holds true in the realm of morality and religion. The title of Kant's essay published for the first time in 1793 is an eloquent one: *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason.* While the philosophers of the French Enlightenment criticized religion in the name of reason, the Germans attempted to reconcile the two.[34] This was also Kant's intention: the source of morality was autonomous reason, not obedience to a transcendent God. In this sense, the moral law decreed by human reason acquired a divine status.

From the heights of a "pure rational system of religion," Kant reviewed one by one the historical religions, designing a hierarchy in which Judaism was relegated to the lowest level.[35] At the top of the hierarchy was the Protestant faith. In the middle were all the other faiths, from Islam to Catholicism. Against the historical-empirical background of the ecclesiastic faiths, finally, there stood out the pure morality inspired by the religion of reason. In spite of the hierarchical ascendency, it was quite a leap to separate the religion of reason from the other religions.

But what are the criteria for this judgment? Isn't this rather a case of a pre-judgment peeking out from behind a reason that is proud of being devoid of Reason?

Kant's reason was based upon a secularized concept of Christianity that, in this sense, is neither autonomous nor pure. While Kant seemed to be able to make the leap that marked the distance between the religion of reason and the historical religions, he nevertheless did nothing more than secularize Lutheran theology – whether he was aware of it or not – proposing a pseudo-theological discourse on religion, morality, politics, and even metaphysics. In this way, a paradigm destined to repeat itself took on philosophical legitimacy: the paradigm of a presumptive secularism (at times even a full-blown atheism) that brought to bear theological arguments in a concealed, dissimulated way.

From here were unleashed, in the course of the modern age, the most violent attacks against Judaism.

The "spirit" of Kant is cloaked in metaphysical dichotomies that have theological resonances: pure/impure, internal/external, universal/specific, rational/empirical, moral/legal, autonomous/heteronomous. And in every dichotomy, Judaism incarnates the negative pole, the extreme to be discarded.36

Kant carried out two moves: first and foremost, he excluded Judaism from the realm of theology; and then he expelled the Jews from the political body of the state. This double elimination – theological–political, aprioristic and prejudicial – would have disastrous repercussions, marking the passage from religious hatred of the Jews to modern anti-Semitism; and this passage was all the more authoritative because it was philosophical.37

In an important section of *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, Kant specified the place assigned to Judaism, which is not on the lowest level of his hierarchy of religions, but actually outside of it. For Kant, Judaism "is not a religion"; if anything, it belongs in the political realm. This is what Kant wrote:

> Judaism is not a religion at all but simply the union of a number of individuals who, since they belonged to a particular stock, established themselves into a community under purely political laws, hence not into a church; Judaism was rather *meant* to be a purely secular state, so that, were it to be dismembered through adverse accidents, it would still be left with the political faith (which pertains to it by essence) that this state would be restored to it (with the advent of the Messiah).38

This passage should in no way be underestimated, not only for how striking it is but also because of the history of the effects that it has had.39 Hitler was able to look to Kant and the German tradition all the way back to Martin Luther for confirmation of the inherent ambiguity of Judaism, which professed to be a religion but was really a political belief system. Nor was it an ordinary belief system, but rather a messianic one – awaiting the day when it could re-establish the Jewish constitution in the world.40 This political form – continued Kant, following in the footsteps of Spinoza – is the *Theokratie*, that is, the Realm of God. Although

the name of God is honored, the Jewish constitution – Kant explained – remains solely political, given that God, who does not presume to "have rights over, or claims upon," consciences, is "only a secular regent," *ein weltlicher Regent*.[41]

Even though he took ideas from Spinoza, Kant misunderstood him, not only because he saw in the Jewish theocracy an "aristocracy of priests," but above all because he upset the theological-political balance that distinguished the Jewish people for both Spinoza and Mendelssohn. Kant, instead, projected upon Judaism a particular characteristic of Christianity: the split between the theological realm and the political realm – a gesture that was destined to be reiterated. In this way, Kant ended up asserting that Judaism lacked any religious content, but also that it did not have any moral content. What's more, he expelled Judaism from the realm of the spirit.

For Kant, Judaism was made up only of statutory laws, impositions, and commandments that, unsupported by any "moral disposition," were aimed solely at "external actions."[42] The age-old accusation of exteriority was substantiated for Kant by additional themes: amorality, and the legalism that led the Jews to act not out of respect for the law, but simply out of conformity. For Kant, an act was moral only if carried out in the pure intention of duty, while it was immoral if it was dictated by external motives, by egoism, prudence, convenience, utility. There was no heartfelt adherence to Jewish law, because there was no heart, nor any authentic interiority.

How could this condemnation be reconciled with the historical nexus that links Judaism to Christianity? Following the theology of substitution, Kant found the origins of the "universal church" in Christianity. So, even though Christianity emerged from Judaism, it would sanction its "total abandonment." The "*counterfeit service*" was replaced by "purely moral religion."[43] For Kant, the abolition of the "corporeal sign" – circumcision – represented the transition from Jewish particularism to the universality of the new faith.[44] So one should consider that "every Christian must be a Jew whose Messiah has come"; those who had initially wanted to open the way for the new doctrine did away with the idea of continuity between Judaism and Christianity.[45] And it was

precisely Jesus who marked the discontinuity between the two faiths; Kant saw in Jesus the "teacher of the Gospel" announced as "returning to the heaven from which he came," with that death that was "undeserved, yet meritorious," with that otherworldly testimony in which the Jews, denying the immortality of the soul, obstinately persisted in not believing.[46] The "revolution" of the Crucifixion was summed up in the rejection of worldly existence. "A secularized notion of Kant's image of Christ informed his account of autonomous reason."[47] What could be further from that which incarnates heteronomy in the Jews?

Confirmation came in Kant's next move four years later, in his *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, in which the Jews were expelled from the political body of the state.

> The Palestinians living among us since their exile, or at least the great majority of them, have earned the most unfounded reputation of being cheaters, on account of the spirit of usury. Admittedly it seems strange to think of a nation of cheaters; but it is just as strange to think of a nation of nothing but merchants, the far greater majority of whom are bound by an ancient superstition recognized by the state they live in, seek no civil honor, but rather wish to make up for their loss through the advantage of outwitting the people under whom they find protection, and even one another.[48]

This passage is taken from one of the notes to which Kant relegated his comments on the marginal phenomenon that Judaism represented for him. But in spite of that, this is a passage that, without concealing Kant's Judeophobia, already attests to an open anti-Semitism.[49] In this passage, Kant referred to the Jews as "Palestinians"; thus they were foreigners and, what's more, they were Oriental, Asian. They did not belong to Europe, much less to Germany, where they lived in exile, totally ungrateful for the hospitality of their hosts, instead cheating them through fraud and deception. The "lie" denounced by Martin Luther became "deceit," because the accusation was extended to the theological and political-economic spheres. Devoid of religion, of morals, devoid even of the dignity of being citizens, the Jews had no scruples about their own unproductivity, about living off the toil of others. The spirit of Judaism was *Wuchergeist*, the spirit of usury. For

Kant, the profession to which the Jews had been constrained for centuries became a metaphor for their very existence.[50] They lived by practicing usury – consuming, corrupting the political body into which they had insinuated themselves. The accusation could not have been more serious: for Kant, the Jews were "a nation of cheaters."

The Jewish nation – in its entirety – was seen by Kant as a threat to the capitalist state, which was based on the rational distribution of goods and property. To each his own: autonomous reason sustains and celebrates capitalism.[51] But, for Kant, the law that had sprung from an original unified will and gave place to the "mine and yours" attitude was imperiled by the Jews, whose rights went back to a natural sharing of the earth and whose actions consumed and exploited the goods produced by capitalism.[52]

Thus, few alternatives remained. In his *Conflict of the Faculties*, written in 1798, toward the end of his life, Kant proposed the "euthanasia of Judaism," a solution that today has a macabre resonance.[53] But he insinuated that the idea could be attributed to one of his numerous Jewish students, Lazarus Ben David, "a very good mind of that nation." The good, painless death for Judaism would be "the leaving behind of all ancient regulatory teachings," following "the religion of Jesus," yet not converting to Christianity – in the end, even "this division of sects must, yet, also finally disappear" – but arriving in union with the Christian faith, at a "pure moral religion" that would end the "drama" of the religions on earth, and reach the "restoration of all things." Evoking the Gospel of Saint John (10:16), Kant returned to the eschatological vision of Saints Paul and Augustine: "hereby [. . .] there being only one shepherd and one flock."[54]

The role that Judaism played in Kantian philosophy should not be underestimated. By means of a systematization of reason, purified and brought to its apex, Kant's ambitious aim was to re-establish metaphysics under the banner of freedom and human autonomy. This metaphysics of pure reason was not devoid of repercussions on Kant's fantasy about the Jews. He didn't settle for rendering the existence of the Jews in a metaphor; he went a step beyond, attempting to conceptualize the eternal and immutable essence of Judaism. In this impossible undertaking, where what he was attempting to define defied definition, in a continual encroachment

of theology and politics, Judaism became inextricably linked to heteronomy – that is, to everything that reason cannot and should not be. Jews, who follow an external, foreign law, the *nomos* of the Other, were consigned to Otherness. Judaism was therefore placed outside of metaphysics, which, in order to triumph, proposed its euthanasia.

4 Hegel and the Jew without Property

What is the place reserved for Judaism in Hegel's system? What role do the Jews play in that unprecedented undertaking in the history of the West in which Reason, through successive paths in history, penetrates into reality and is revealed? Universal thought, which unfolds speculatively by gathering into itself, learns not to separate itself from the individual – indeed, it strives to bridge the separation and overcome it. The word that sets the rhythm for this dialectical march is *Aufhebung*, which has at least three meanings: negation, preservation, and elevation.

When Hegel was in Jena writing the *Phenomenology of Spirit* lectures, which he completed in 1807, he was full of enthusiasm not only for his system, but also for the epoch of renewal in which he was living. He imagined that he could regard history from an almost ultra-historical sort of threshold, from which he could see both the end and the beginning. For that matter, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is a manifestation of human history, but also of that becoming of the Spirit in which the Christian concept of incarnation is realized. In spite of the theological sphere in which he discussed the entire procession of religions and civilizations, Hegel forgot Judaism – or rather, he passed over it in silence. It was only in discussing "observing reason" – a form of knowledge which, like that which is "intimately evil," has the immediate necessity of being "inverted" – that Hegel introduced an analogy with the Jewish people.

> It may be said of the Jewish people that it is precisely because they stand before the portal of salvation that they are, and have been, the most reprobable and rejected: what that people should be in and for it self [*sic*], this essential nature of its own self, is not explicitly present to it; on the contrary, it places it beyond itself. By this alienation it creates for itself

the *possibility* of higher existence, if only it could take back again into itself its alienated object, than if it had remained undisturbed within the immediacy of being.55

This chilling scene cannot help but recall a story by Franz Kafka. The doorkeeper assures the man about to enter the courtroom: “That’s possible,” but “not now.”56 The door of the Law – as revealed at the end of the story – was closed only to the protagonist of the story, Josef K. But if Kafka perceived in the Jews’ long wait an exemplar of the human condition, Hegel instead saw in that impediment the destiny – unique and enigmatic – of the Jewish people.

Salvation came from the Jews, but salvation was denied to them. Even after traveling all the way to that door, through which others will pass, the Jews remain stuck, motionless on the threshold. The Jews reject, and they are rejected. The verb *verwerfen* means to discard, to reject, but also to reproach, to condemn.57 Thus, the absolute is not manifested in that abject people who, left standing by the road to salvation, were also excluded from history. Therefore, we have the enigma of the Jewish people who have obstinately survived on the margins of society, for whom there is no salvation.58 Kant had stated that conversion to Christianity was the only possibility for Jews to be integrated into Europe. According to Hegel, instead, this integration was impossible precisely because of the paradoxical condition of the Jewish people, who, if they had survived for centuries, had been able to do so precisely because they had remained faithful to their rejection of Christianity.

While the Jews were recognized as the precursors of Christianity, the first to announce the arrival of the Messiah, at the same time they were condemned for their blindness by Hegel. The Jews had the promise, but did not understand it. Indeed, they betrayed that promise, stubbornly adhering in their unfaithfulness to a faith that they were incapable of recognizing. This is the origin of the accusation of *perfidy*; more than unfaithful, the Jews appeared to be perfidious to the eyes of the Christians, because they failed the faith that had been given to them; they transgressed it at the same moment that they announced it.

In Hegel’s view, Judaism had evaded and continued to evade the

Christian *Aufhebung*. It did not let itself be taken over or sublimated – as it should have. For Hegel, whose thinking buttressed the speculative interpretation of Christianity, Judaism should have been negated and then lifted up to a superior existence. Since Judaism resisted this, and did not permit the spirit to overcome alienation, "returning" to itself, it was excluded from the dialectic of universal history. It was not crossed by that path of reconciliation of the Spirit that, regenerating that which is separate, resuscitating that which is dead, arrives at absolute knowledge – that is, the certainty of its throne.

Judaism thus appeared to Hegel to be a dead remnant of its own past that continued to exist without a role in, or a hope for, the future. In its existence, devoid of Spirit, fossilized and petrified, immobile within the immediacy of existence, Judaism "occupies an unhappy void," an *unselige Leere*.59 Therefore, it became a paradigm of a "bad consciousness," an emblematic figure of separation. Doomed to be replaced, Judaism represents negativity in an insuperable nakedness. Here we can already detect the metaphorical Jew, the figure inverse to the West and its aspiration to absolute unity.

Although Hegel modified or revised his position several times, he was never able to solve the aporia of Jewish existence, which remained outside his system.60 In this sense, Hegel's "Christocentric" perspective was a determining factor.61 The secularized version of philosophy did not change the drastic judgment of Judaism. So much so that, for Hegel, God in his infiniteness continuously manifested himself in Christian Europe.

From the time of Hegel's earliest writings, the enigma of Judaism appeared to be inescapable. Every population of antiquity, after having offered its contribution, had disappeared from the stage of history, subsumed into another form. From the Egyptians to the Phoenicians, from the Greeks to the Romans, none had escaped this rule. The Jews were the only exception: they continued to exist; they had survived the Middle Ages, the genuinely Christian epoch, and arrived all the way at the modern age. Why in the world had they survived beyond their reason for being? The answer given by Saint Augustine, who perceived in the Jews the witnesses to the truth of Christianity until the end of time, was too mythological for Hegel. How then to explain the persistence of

that obsolete relic?

In an analogous way to Kant, who saw all of the evils of positive religion concentrated in Judaism, the young Hegel, too, was bent on extracting autonomous reason from the hard shell of prescriptiveness: for Hegel, religion was an indispensable form of the spirit.

And for Hegel the religion *par excellence* was Christianity, in its Lutheran variant; this was his point of departure for judging Judaism.[62] The clichés of anti-Jewish rhetoric emerged from Hegel's earliest writings. Already in a fragment from 1794, Hegel wrote: "There is no denying the backward and immoral concepts of the Jews – the anger, the partiality, the hatred of other peoples, the intolerance of their Jehovah."[63] According to Hegel, these concepts "passed into" the Christian religion, damaging it. The tone is the same in other early writings by Hegel, from the *Life of Jesus* of 1795 to the texts collected in *Positivity of the Christian Religion*, a project to which Hegel returned several times between 1795 and 1800, describing the Jews at the time of Jesus with indignation and disapproval:

> The Jews were a people who derived their legislation from the supreme wisdom on high and whose spirit was now overwhelmed by a burden of statutory commands which pedantically prescribed a rule for every casual action of daily life and gave the whole people the look of a monastic order. As a result of this system, the holiest of things, namely, the service of God and virtue, was ordered and compressed in dead formulas, and nothing save pride in their slavish obedience to laws not laid down by themselves was left to the Jewish spirit, which already was deeply mortified and embittered by the subjugation of the state to a foreign power.[64]

Among the "best men in mind and heart," dissident Jews who could no longer submit to that "dead mechanism," there arose miraculously, in antithesis to Jewish "law," the figure of Jesus, "free from the contagious illness of his age and his people."[65] The theology of substitution was reinforced by Hegel who, in fact, emphasized the caesura between the Jewish and Christian religions.

Nevertheless, if Judaism constituted an enigma for Hegel, it was because the question was not only theological, but also political. It is not by chance that Hegel spoke of a "Jewish nation," and that he did not fail to stress the strangeness of a God who was a "political legislator."66 It is from this perspective that certain reflections of Hegel's should be read – reflections in which there was raised for the first time an issue that, in spite of Hegel himself, would subsequently have disastrous effects.

Every people had had its "national imagery" that continued to live on in popular tradition; even "the ancient Germans" had "their Valhalla where their gods and their heroes dwelt."67 Christianity had "emptied Valhalla, felled the sacred groves, extirpated the national imagery," introducing completely "strange" figures such as David and Solomon. The pagan landscape of the ancient Germans had been replaced by the Jewish one – this was the accusation made against Christianity, which was seen as being in antithesis to autochthonous paganism. The result – Hegel observed – is that "we are without religious imagery which is homegrown or linked with our history, and we are without any political imagery whatsoever." Only "phantasms" populate the territory of that which "was never a nation."68 Could it be precisely because of this ominous usurpation that the Jewish nation had not been able to constitute itself? "*Is Judea, then, the fatherland of the Teutons?*"69 Even though Hegel believed that a restoration of pagan mythology was not possible, the question had threatening resonances.

But even more disturbing are the pages contained in Hegel's essay "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate," written between the winter of 1798 and the summer of 1799. The first part of the essay is made up of a historical phenomenology of Judaism in which the stereotypes of popular defamation acquire a philosophical legitimacy.70

In "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate," Hegel wrote that Judaism was a particularism that should be superseded by the universality of Christianity. The concept of scission had been introduced in the time of Abraham, with whom the history of the Jewish people "begins." Spirit, which should always be unified, can at times assume an alienated form, which the young Hegel

called “fate,” *Schicksal*, using the term in a sense that was not yet dialectical.[71] For the young Hegel, the spirit of Judaism was the implacable fate of its negativity.

According to Hegel, laceration and enmity were the hallmarks of the establishment of the Jewish world, which imposed itself, as exemplified by the story of Noah, by means of a never-resolved conflict with Nature.[72] But it was with Abraham that the scission became perspicuous. Abraham’s first act was a *Trennung*, a “disseverance.”[73] For no reason, and without any emotion, Abraham severed “the bonds of communal life and love”; “these beautiful relationships of his youth, he spurned.” He cut off his own history – the cutting of circumcision – from which the Hebrew people arose. And he had no regrets, not even for lost beauty. Abraham was not like the Greeks. Hegel believed that the Jews did not love beauty; in fact, they did not love at all: “Abraham wanted *not* to love, he wanted to be free by not loving.”

Abraham’s existence was characterized by wandering. A “stranger,” a *Fremdling* on the earth, he forever remained a “foreigner,” a *Fremder*.[74] Like his own flocks, Abraham was a nomad, wandering through a territory that was for him “without borders,” with which he could not identify. He had no place he could call his own. After having renounced his own home and hearth, he never took root in any other place. He remained consigned to the constant wandering that reinforced his isolation. He was at war with the nations, all hostile enemies. Not having a “lasting domesticity with other people,” he tried to get what he needed, and, if he was weaker than his opponents, he resorted to “cunning and duplicity”; if he was stronger, he struck “with a sword.” In the jealous confinement of his identity, in the ferocity of his endogamy, he even kept his family separate. His son was his only love, the only kind of immortality that he knew, “his only hope for posterity.”[75] He was placated only when he was certain that he could eliminate his own son and destroy that love with his own hands. In his opposition to the world, in which both extremes ran the risk of being annihilated, Abraham was “supported by God.” But his God was “essentially different from the Lares and the national gods.” By means of infinite opposition, Abraham acceded to infinity. And he submitted. While he could dominate the world only by allying himself with the infinite power of his

omnipotent God, he in turn became dominated.

For Hegel, the Jews were a race of slaves, to the point that they even refused to recognize their own Exodus as a liberation. If they left Egypt, it was because of the "tricks" that Moses used to dazzle them, not because of a desire for freedom. No act of heroism accompanied them – only the plagues that were inflicted upon the Egyptians. And during the "invisible attack" unleashed upon their enemy, they seemed like the "notorious robbers during the plague at Marseilles," who had not hesitated to distribute the goods that they had looted, thus spreading the contagion. In this comparison of Hegel's, there re-emerged the medieval accusation of contamination. Hegel did not hesitate to take up this accusation in a cunning way: "The Jews vanquish, but they have not battled."76 For him, impotence and passivity characterized the Jews' messianism. There could be no hope for a people who, even at the moment when they were becoming free, continued to behave like slaves.

The philosopher who, in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, had delineated that servant–master relationship in which, on account of a necessary dialectical reversal, the servant becomes the master of the master, inextricably conferred upon the Jewish people a condition of perpetual slavery. In the three stages through which the Jewish nation was established – Abraham's departure from his country and kindred, the Exodus from Egypt, and the imposition of the law of Moses – the freedom of the Jews was revealed as a form of slavery, according to Hegel: "The liberator of his nation was also its lawgiver."77 Thus, there was no reversal of roles for a people who, from the very beginning, seemed to compromise any dialectic.

But, along with Hegel's reproach of the Jews for their passive slavery, there also surfaced the theme of heteronomy. Hegel developed this theme in a different way from Kant, from whom he had distanced himself; he attributed to Kant an arid, abstract sense of moral duty that was almost akin to the legalism of the Jews. According to Hegel, heteronomy, which undermined the existence of the Jews, had not only a theological value, but also – and above all – a political one.

In Hegel's view, the Jewish people were attached to the "absolute

Subject" by a relationship of power in which every Jew was constrained not only to remember the nullity of man, but also to practice that expropriation – for example, through *terumà* (the offering of tithes) – with which it recognized the "right of property" only for God.78 The Jews were already always dispossessed. The peculiarity of Jewish law and of the *Yovèl*, the institution of the biblical Jubilee year, did not escape Hegel. The similarity between the law of Moses and the laws of Solon and Lycurgus, who had attempted to impede the theft that is represented by the accumulation of wealth, was evident to him. In both cases, societal laws neutralized the disproportion that would threaten political freedom. But once again the analogy between the ancient Greeks and the Jews was only on the surface. In the republics of ancient Greece, a re-balancing was occasionally introduced among the citizens who were "all free, selfsubsistent."79 For the Jews, it was the right to own property that was denied. The Jubilee year, which recurs at the end of seven Sabbatical years, renewed a radical expropriation that gave property only by lending it or letting it be managed, and envisioned possession only as a form of loan. Jews were obliged to recognize that appropriation was "extortion" and that "they had no freedom and no rights."80 It was precisely the denial of the right to own land that for Hegel was the most striking. Jews could not say "own," *eigen*, "land," *Boden*. And, in a note, he recorded the biblical verse: "For the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me."81

This is how Hegel launched his political accusation against the Jews. If they did not have the right to own property, then they could not be citizens, *Staatsbürger*; in fact, they could not even have a state. Hegel confirmed this presupposition also in his *Philosophy of Right*. But there he declared that the Jews were strangers to the state, and to civil rights, in a theological–political passage that in the end has ontological implications.

> Among the Jews, [. . .] they had no freedom and no rights, since they held their possessions only on loan and not as property, since as citizens they were all nothing [*ein Nichts*].82

This is an *ante litteram* death sentence pronounced through the

spirit of the world. Derrida's comment on this passage was: "So there is no 'for itself,' no Jewish being-(close)-by-itself."[83] In other words, there could not be a Jewish-being in the philosophical–Hegelian sense.

If Hegel said of the Jews that "as citizens they were all nothing," it was on account of their theocracy – that is, that "equal dependence of all on their invisible ruler."[84] Hegel's disdain was uncontainable, and incited him to return, in his own way, to the story told by Flavius Josephus about the entry of Pompey the Great into Jerusalem. The Roman general was eager to enter the Kodesh Hakodashìm, the Holy of Holies, the innermost part of the temple of Jerusalem, finally to see that mysterious God of the Jews. But Pompey was astonished, once he had entered the "secretum," after several ritual passages, and he felt "deceived" when he discovered that "that place was an empty space." Hegel did not perceive in the Holy of Holies the spirit of monotheism, the ineffable Presence of the God of Israel who, by his separateness, left the Void. Rather, he deplored the fact that when Pompey "had approached the heart of the temple, the center of adoration, and had hoped to discover in it the root of the national spirit, to find indeed in one central point the life-giving soul of this remarkable people," there was nothing.[85] Thus, for Hegel and Derrida, the Jews were a people without soul, whose existence rested upon the Void: "No center, no heart, an empty space, nothing."[86] The Jewish hearth was only a shelter for the interior desert. The Jews' *secretum* had nothing to reveal. And since their being was alienated, even the secret remained a secret, that is, "wholly alien" to them.[87] The Jews possessed nothing of their own, and their existence was marked by expropriation.

In his mature writings, particularly those from the time when he was in Berlin, Hegel shifted his aim, but without changing his harsh judgment of Judaism and the Jews.[88] In the *Aesthetics*, Hegel devoted some space to Jewish poetry, but only to consider it as an example of the sublime negative, the result of "unconscious inspiration, separate," an impotent attempt to represent the infinite.[89] The theme of Judaism, almost absent in Hegel's systematic works, emerges in his historical works. Above all in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, in the chapter entitled "Judaea," he seems to tend toward admitting that Judaism had

played a decisive role because, although it belonged to the East, it surpassed it, turning its principle upside-down, affirming the primacy of the spiritual: "This forms the point of separation between East and West; Spirit descends into the depths of its own being."[90] Nevertheless, in a schema that is repeated, the unhappy conscience gives way to another by itself, in which it cannot recognize itself. Hegel even goes as far as saying that, in Judaism, "Spirit still appears posited as nonspiritual."[91] And while the reproaches multiply – slavery, passivity, cruelty, immorality – the serious charge resonates: "the State is an institution not consonant with the Judaistic principle, and it is alien to the legislation of Moses."[92]

Hegel's judgment did not change – not even in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, which he gave between 1821 and 1831; in these lectures, in spite of a few concessions, Hegel accused as a whole the "religion of sublimity" which was sublime only on account of the abyss between the divine infinite and the human finite; he accused it from the "metaphysical concept" to the cult, from existence to politics. If, from a theological point of view, Judaism was losing ground compared to Christianity, only from a political point of view did it demonstrate all of its limitations compared to ancient Greece. The strategy of Hegel, who had only an approximate knowledge of the Jewish world, was to make the defects that his Christian conception projected from the outside seem as if they were internal defects. He only attributed a single merit to Israel: that of thinking of God as One. "This subjective unity is not substance, for it is subjective, but it is indeed absolute power."[93] But the "exclusive" One of the Jews is still abstract, pure power, "without shape," not dialectized, not "one of three," and therefore "only negative." In the presence of this power, the Jewish people, who are supposed to be "chosen," do not know what freedom is, and they develop only a "servile consciousness."[94] Hegel was irritated by the notion of the Jews as God's chosen people, on account of the logical paradox that was inherent in it: the universality of God would be reduced to a national particularity. And, in addition, this notion generates "hatred," the "odium generis humani" that had been observed by Tacitus. "The others – the *goyim* – get their own back for the heavy yoke they have to bear."[95]

Given that the Ten Commandments are laws, for the Jews, "every political change is called a falling away from God."[96] Without mentioning him, Hegel cited Spinoza, who had grasped the peculiarity of the Jewish theocracy in this theological–political connection.[97] Since this connection was incomprehensible for Hegel, he dismantled it, and subjected all of Jewish politics to an annihilating criticism. Since spirit was not spirit, thus politics was not politics. The Jews did not know what a state was. And for Hegel, where there was no spirit of the state, there was no politics. Judaism – nomadic, tribal, anarchic – was thus apolitical. To back up this very serious accusation – possibly the most serious he made against the Jews – Hegel again recalled the institution of the Jubilee year and the negation of ownership of property. For Hegel, Jewish law (*Gesetz*) was not even a right (*Recht*), because it did not allow for private property. And only someone who could stand on his own land was a citizen. The Jews were not citizens: "The people of God possess Canaan."[98] According to Hegel, possession has a divine basis – it is God who gave the Jews that land as an "exclusive possession," to the point that it "can be taken from them by others." The Jews "took the land by force from the inhabitants of Palestine, because God had promised it to them."[99] And since they did not recognize the right of peoples, based upon the division of land and upon private property, thus they did not even recognize their own right. They possessed land only as custodians, because God was the only owner.

The political condition of the Jews, who according to their own legislation did not own property, and who were nothing as citizens, had an ontological value for Hegel. This was the origin of the difficulty that he had in inserting them into his system.[100] The Jews remained outsiders until the end – outside of history, outside of dialectics. Seen from the perspective of the Logos of Saint John the Evangelist, which informed Hegel's dialectic and governed his speculative movement, for Hegel the Jews were – as Derrida said – "not-raised" and "not-raisable"; they were remnants that could not be permeated, immobile and rigid in their resistance. "The Jew is a stone heart."[101] Indeed, the stone is the metonymy for the philosophical figure of the Jew. Petrified in his adherence to the law of the Pharisees, the Jew also threatens to petrify others – not only beings, but also existence, because existence cannot occur in

immediacy, but only in its unfolding – or rather, in the *being* of union, or of the "*santa copula*."[102] This is as if to say – as Derrida decried – that "for Hegel no ontology is possible before the Gospel or outside it."[103]

If being is *Aufhebung*, then Jews are opposed to it with all their weight; they allow themselves to be neither sublated nor uplifted. Therefore, they do not refer to an event of the past, but rather accompany the system into the future: they are its "specter," which, while blocking it, at the same time ensures its future, while making it impossible.[104] Submissive for centuries to being, Jews undermine its logic from the inside; they threaten to make it implode – with the impossibility of a Jewish being in itself. The Jews become a challenge for the West, which aspires to absolute unity. Should the "remnant" represented by the Jews be converted, assimilated, or gotten rid of? It depends on the semantic ambiguity of the term *Aufhebung*, the notion of dialectical sublation. The sacrifice seems to be inevitable, given that the West cannot tolerate an internal exclusion. For Hegel, the question was clear, and anti-Semitism took on the force of a philosophical discourse. "We get virulent formulae" – writes Levinas – "in which the enemy of the Jew will neither bother to understand nor, above all, make understood the ambiguity of terms. Anti-Semitism based within the System, which amounts to saying within the absolute. What a godsend!"[105]

5 "Anti-anti-Semite?" Nietzsche, the Antichrist, and the Falsification of Values

From his miserable attic in Turin, shortly after his mental breakdown, Nietzsche launched one of his innumerable solitary tirades against his enemies, the anti-Semites of the German empire, in one of his last "letters of insanity" to Franz Overbeck, dating from around January 4, 1889:

To friend Overbeck and his wife,

> Although till now you have had little faith in my ability to remain solvent, I still hope to prove that I am a person who pays his debts – For example, my debts to you both . . .
> I am just having all anti-Semites shot . . .

With this end of a “movement that is three-quarters rotten” announced in absentia, the “Jewish question” that had concerned Nietzsche for decades, sometimes openly, at other times in a more hidden way, seemed also to come to an end – to the point that he had defined himself as an “anti-anti-Semite” in a letter dated February 7, 1886 to his sister Elisabeth.[107]

Vehemently anti-Semitic, Elisabeth Nietzsche had married the activist Bernhard Förster. In 1887, she followed Förster to Paraguay, where they founded the “Nueva Germania” colony, which was supposed to be devoted to the experimental rearing of children of the Aryan race. After her brother’s death, Elisabeth became the executor of his estate in a controversial way, and founded the Nietzsche-Archiv in Weimar, where, among other things, she welcomed Hitler in 1943.

During the years of the Third Reich, Nietzsche was considered the visionary who had perceived the possibility of selective reproduction and promoted the need to raise a “race” of dominators, the future “masters of the earth,” where there would no longer be room for the weak, the sick, and the superfluous, and where it would be necessary to enforce a “morality [. . .] *that makes them* [men] *strong*,” “so as to work as artists upon ‘man,’” or rather the *Übermensch*, the superman.[108]

Already during World War I, when his *Zarathustra* was part of the kit of every German soldier, Nietzsche had assumed the stature of the prophet of the German fatherland. Subsequently, he became an inspiration for National Socialism.[109] The connection seemed unbreakable: it was difficult to be a National Socialist and not recognize oneself in Nietzsche’s thought.

In the mid-1950s that connection began to loosen. The way in which György Lukács, in his 1954 book *The Destruction of Reason*, had stigmatized Nietzsche, taking as his point of departure certain Marxist presuppositions and indicating Hitler as the “executor of Nietzsche’s spiritual testament,” seemed to be unilateral.[110] Walter Kaufmann offered a new, tamer image of Nietzsche – an image that was above all more acceptable for the Anglo-Saxon world. Kaufmann had had to emigrate from Freiburg

to Princeton at the end of the 1930s. His monograph, published in 1950, began the de-Nazification of Nietzsche that took place throughout Western culture and culminated in the 1970s.[111] The work of Montinari and Colli, who worked in the Nietzsche Archive at Weimar, was decisive; beginning in 1967, they published the critical edition of Nietzsche's writings. Now Nietzsche appeared in a completely new way, as the philosopher of perspectivism, of metaphor, and of difference. The publication of his works provided the framework for a complex operation of critical self-examination by the left, which re-examined Nietzsche's politics and culture. The German debate about Nietzsche adhered to this tendency only in part: if, on the one hand, it seemed more difficult to extrapolate his thinking from the historical context, on the other hand, the lack of a deep philosophical reflection on Nazism and the extermination of the Jews in his works favored a de-Nazified image of Nietzsche.

In this view of Nietzsche, which started to vacillate during the 1990s, there were still many disturbing questions left unanswered – questions precisely about the interpretation of Nietzsche's theses on the Jews and on Judaism, not to mention the reception of his ideas during the years of National Socialism. Since the doctrinaires of the Reich had taken up Nietzsche's words, if the philosopher Alfred Baeumler, who knew Nietzsche's writings well, had pointed out his deep-seated hostility toward the Jews, then the image of Nietzsche the anti-Semite, or the philo-Semite, perhaps needed to be re-examined.[112]

Steven Aschheim opened a new chapter in the case of Nietzsche; beyond the role in the Third Reich that might be attributed to him, Aschheim examined the repercussions, direct or indirect, that Nietzsche's thought had had on the Nazis' program of extermination.[113] This issue had already been raised in part by George Lichtheim, who had posited Nietzsche as an inspirer of the extermination program, and by Conor Cruise O'Brien, who observed: "When the values that the Jews had reversed were restored, there would be no limit and no Jews."[114] The theme of more recent debates has been precisely the way in which, with his anti-Christianity, Nietzsche radicalized the "Jewish question." In a thorough study, in which Nietzsche's reception in Germany up until 1945 was reconstructed for the first time, Thomas Mittmann

raised the issue of Nietzsche's responsibilities as a philosopher whose anti-Semitism surpassed all of the preceding forms and had introduced the very idea of eugenics: "Nietzsche did not think of a violent 'solution to the Jewish question,' but the eliminatory dimensions of his philosophy favored its intensification."[115]

Within a debate that has never stopped, and where from the very beginning those who, even from the Jewish side, consider Nietzsche's anti-Semitism as a form of philo-Semitism, have faced off against those who instead view his anti-Semitism as an extreme radicalization of hatred, it is necessary to return to his writings and read them in the light of his philosophical program taken as a whole.[116]

Beyond good and evil, Jews and Judaism play a central role in Nietzsche's work. And it is equally certain that his writings, with the aphoristic style that characterizes them, the psychological depth that underlies them, the irony that runs throughout them, and the taste for paradox that pervades them, have always given rise to divergent – if not opposite – interpretations, and have therefore provoked numerous cultural battles. Much has been said about the different masks that Nietzsche put on, about his ease in assuming the different voices that he utilized in his aphorisms. Nevertheless, this does not mean that hermeneutics should not respond to the criteria of coherence, and that Nietzsche did not defend precise philosophical theses. In this regard, Derrida, drawing attention to a complicated complicity, observed:

> It would still be necessary to account for the possibility of this mimetic inversion and perversion. [. . .] There is nothing absolutely contingent about the fact that the only political regime to have effectively brandished his name as a major and official banner was Nazi. I do not say this in order to suggest that this kind of "Nietzschean" politics is the only one conceivable for all eternity, nor that it corresponds to the best reading of his legacy, nor even that those who have not picked up this reference have produced a better reading of it. No. The future of the Nietzsche-text is not closed. But if, within the still-open contours of an era, the only politics calling itself – proclaiming itself – Nietzschean will have been a Nazi one, then this is necessarily significant and must be questioned in all of its consequences.[117]

Nietzsche's philosophical program was in many ways the opposite of Hegel's, because it aimed not at achieving, but rather at overturning, the progress of modernity, which Nietzsche considered to be a history of decadence. According to Nietzsche, the sources of that decadence were rationalistic metaphysics and Christianity. The son of a Protestant pastor, Nietzsche denounced Christianity as the most subtle form of nihilism, which negated life, oppressed it, and suffocated it, manipulating people's consciences and instilling in them a sense of guilt. This was possible both through a moral order, in which punishments and rewards were dispensed, and above all through a transcendent God who had denaturalized the world. Even after the death of God, which Nietzsche announced in this way – "God is dead! [. . .] And we have killed him" – Nietzsche wondered: "When will all these shadows of God cease to obscure us?"118 And he added an imperative and programmatic question: "When shall we have nature entirely undeified!"119 Liberating Nature from the shadow of God was for Nietzsche-Dionysus the way through which man, too, could return to Nature, re-immersing himself in the eternal chaos of the world and liberating its vital energies.

Nietzsche was a genealogist and thus had no difficulty in perceiving the Jews behind the shadow of God. It was the Jews who had invented Christianity, which had profoundly corrupted and damaged Europe. So it was up to the Jews to remedy this. The fate of Europe, but also of the European Jews, hung in the balance. The highest sacrifice was necessary to atone for the most serious harm: within the narrow margins of this dramatic paradox was summed up the role of the ancestors of Christ who, in the service of the modern Antichrist, Nietzsche-Dionysus, should expiate their original sin. In the guise of a new "crucified one" with the aspect of a Dionysus who aspired to replace the old "crucified one," Nietzsche put on the mask of a Counter-Jesus whose aim was to destroy Christianity, and hurled a new, powerful accusation against the Jews. If, throughout the centuries, the Jews had been blamed for having killed Jesus, Nietzsche now accused them of having created him. Was that a less serious sin? Perhaps it was less serious – but, on careful consideration, wasn't it more destructive and ominous? In any case, for Nietzsche the Jews were guilty.

Nietzsche did not bring the Jews back to the status of an

immutable essence, or Judaism to a fixed concept. His view was perspectival, and it unfolded in three stages, into which he divided the history of Israel.[120]

The first stage was that of the Old Testament, "the book of divine justice," which Nietzsche considered to be almost the document of a primitive age, in which he perceived, beyond the "tremendous remnants of what man once was," a heroic landscape and a life that was affirmed with a Dionysian compliance with Nature.[121] If Nietzsche expressed admiration for that period, whose origin seemed to vanish into myth, it was only because he projected his own ideals onto it. Thus, by subtracting the Old Testament from Jewish history, which would be a story of decadence, Nietzsche could observe: "Originally, especially at the time of the kings, Israel also stood in the right, that is, the natural, relationship to all things."[122]

An unbridgeable gap separates the first period from the second. The ancient biblical era, sublime and irrecoverable, was followed by the historical, real epoch of the Second Temple, in which "priestly" Judaism produced the New Testament, which Nietzsche considered to be, for all intents and purposes, a Jewish text. Thus, the theology of replacement was not reiterated only in appearance. If the gap between biblical Judaism and priestly Judaism, on the one hand, suggests the idea of a lost naturalness, on the other hand it denounces the "denaturalization" decreed by Jewish law, whereby when man submits to it he annuls himself before the transcendent God.[123] This was the period of the transvaluation of values, of resentment, and, above all, of the revolt of the Hebrew slaves.

In his *Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche brought to light the upheaval and revolt carried out by the Jews, "that priestly people" who were able to respond to their enemies and dominators with an act marked by the "most spiritual vengeance."[124] While natural noble values were undermined, the way was opened to the poor, the powerless, the humble, the suffering, the indigent, the sick, the deformed:

> The slave revolt in morals begins by rancor turning creative and giving birth to values – the rancor of beings who, deprived of the direct outlet of action, compensate by an

> imaginary vengeance. All truly noble morality grows out of triumphant self-affirmation. Slave ethics, on the other hand begins by saying *no* to an "outside," and "other," a non-self, and that *no* is the creative act. This reversal of direction of the evaluating look, this invariable looking outward instead of inward, is a fundamental feature of rancor.125

If in the *Genealogy of Morals* Nietzsche connected the transvaluation of values to resentment, in "The Antichrist" he insisted, instead, on denaturalization, by means of which, he believed, Judaism had introduced a life that was against Nature.

> The concept of God falsified, the concept of morality falsified: the Jewish priesthood did not stop there. [. . .] And the church was seconded by the philosophers: the *lie* of the "moral world order" runs through the whole development of modern philosophy.126

In spite of their different perspectives, here Nietzsche appears to be not far from Hegel, and ultimately not even from Kant. For them, not only were the Jews alienated because they followed values that were against Nature; they were the very embodiment of alienation in history. This was ascribed by the three philosophers to Jewish law, to the legalism of the Jews, and to the way in which the Jews' spirit had been petrified within the rigid priestly code of Judaism.

The third phase that Nietzsche identifies in the history of Israel corresponds to the Judaism of the diaspora. Here, his judgment seems to change: he expresses admiration for those who refused for centuries to identify Jesus as the Messiah and who resisted even when they were persecuted:

> In the darkest times of the Middle Ages, when Asiatic clouds had gathered darkly all over Europe, it was Jewish free-thinkers, scholars, and physicians who upheld the banner of enlightenment and of intellectual independence.127

But this judgment should not mislead us; Nietzsche's sympathy was for a psychological disposition: "Psychologically considered, the Jewish people are a people endowed with the toughest vital energy, who, placed in impossible circumstances, voluntarily and out of the most profound prudence of self-preservation, take sides with all the instincts of decadence."128 That resistance had

historically been translated into opposition to Christianity. Thus, on the same page of *Human, All-Too-Human*, Nietzsche could write that if Christianity had "orientalized" the West, Judaism inevitably occidentalized it once again.

Unlike Hegel, who simply did not see any reason for the Jews to exist, at a distance of many decades Nietzsche wondered about the place of the Jews in the Europe of the future. In a continent divided up into nations, whose conflicts were the order of the day, what would become of the "European Jews" who were not a nation, did not have a state, and had led a nomadic life? Nietzsche was a thinker who "had the future of Europe on his conscience," but certainly not the future of the Jews, whom for that matter he did not consider to be fellow citizens, but strangers and foreigners.129 In a way that is not dissimilar to that of other philosophers, Nietzsche stressed what had already happened – that is, the admittance of an "Asiatic" component into the European context, the reception of "this small and strange Jewish world," a process to which there no longer seemed to be any remedy: "Europe has allowed to proliferate within itself an excess of oriental morality, as invented and perceived by the *Jews*."130 And, for Nietzsche, the problem was all the more urgent in Germany. In this regard, he did not mince words:

> I have never yet met a German who was favourably inclined towards the Jews; and however unconditionally all cautious and politic men may have repudiated real anti-Jewism, even his caution and policy is not directed against his class of feeling itself but only against its dangerous immoderation and especially against the distasteful and shameful way in which this immoderate feeling is expressed – one must not deceive oneself about that. That Germany has an ample *sufficiency* of Jews, that the German stomach, German blood has difficulty (and will continue to have difficulty for a long time to come) in absorbing even this quantum of "Jew" [. . .] this is the clear declaration and language of a universal instinct to which one must pay heed, in accordance with which one must act. "Let in no more Jews! And close especially the doors to the East (also to Austria)!"131

Nietzsche's political answer to the "Jewish question" derived from

his theological reflections, from the way in which he saw the inseparable link between Judaism and Christianity. His condemnation of "priestly Judaism," for which he blamed the introduction of the slave revolt into the history of the world, was decisive. It is not possible to maintain that Nietzsche's target was solely Christianity, nor solely Judaism – this would be a reductive view. Nietzsche's target was Christianity to the degree that it was directly connected to Judaism. While Kant or Hegel traced a line of demarcation, thus sparing Christianity from the criticism directed at Judaism, Nietzsche can be considered to have been the first philosopher to unleash an unprecedented attack on Judaism that was broadened to involve Christianity as well. In striking out at the one, he also struck out at the other. It can be said that messianism was Nietzsche's enemy.

The threat was the "Jewification of the whole world" that would be brought about by Israel through the deceptive remnants of it in Christianity: "The Christian is merely a Jew of 'more liberal' persuasion."132 This occurred, for example, in the inoculation against the feeling of sin, that "Jewish invention" that had made inroads thanks to Christian morality.133 It is no accident that, with great clarity, Nietzsche returned to the clash between Rome and Israel, because for him it was during that span of time that everything – or almost everything – had been decided. And for what still remained to be decided in Europe, it was necessary to look at that scenario.

All of this had happened under the sign of a great lie architected by "the Jewish priestly class," which, after having devised the law to "*preserve Israel*, its *possibility* of existing," via the insurrection of the people and a theological transfiguration, led people to believe that Christianity was merely a Jewish event, thus succeeding in projecting Judaism to the outside world. After having "falsified the entire history of Israel," the "entire history of humanity" was also falsified.134 Thus Israel, without waging war, but rather by lying and falsifying, attacked Rome.135

> The watchwords of the battle, written in characters which have remained legible throughout human history, read: "Rome vs. Israel, Israel vs. Rome." No battle has ever been more momentous than this one.136

In Rome, the Jew was perceived as an unnatural being, a "*monstrum* antipodale," and was believed to be "*convicted* of hatred against the whole of mankind."[137] The clash was between, on the one hand, aristocratic, noble values – Roman values – and, on the other hand, Jewish – that is, Christian – values, or rather that inversion of values that had been affirmed by the slave revolt. This was to Nietzsche's eyes Israel's most grave sin, a sin that was embodied both by the inversion of values *and* by the slave revolt. The Jews, a people who believed they were "chosen," but who were "born for slavery," had achieved the "miracle" of the inversion of values by which life on earth had assumed a new, dangerous allure.[138] This is where the importance of Israel in history lay for Nietszche, this is where its threat lay – because without that sense of inversion, the slave revolt would not have been possible. "Salvation comes from the Jews"; Nietzsche cited, not without irony, the Gospel of Saint John (4:22) in a particularly violent passage:

> Insofar as it was a great plebeian movement of the Roman Empire, Christianity was the uplifting of the lowest, uncultured, oppressed, sick, insane, poor, slaves, the old fishwives, the vile – in short, everyone who would have been right to commit suicide, but didn't have the courage.[139]

In the hope of Israel, these "low" people found enough happiness to make living bearable. In this salvation *offered* to the slaves, in this "ancient, mendacious password of the *privilege of the majority*" lay the challenge that Israel hurled at the very heart of Rome. In the slave revolt, Nietzsche identified "one of the most radical declarations of war"[140] – because the revolt was not completely put down and Israel never stopped winning:

> Has the victory so far been gained by the Romans or by the Jews? But this is really an idle question. Remember who it is before whom one bows down, in Rome itself, as before the essence of all supreme values – and not only in Rome but over half the globe [. . .] before three Jews and one Jewess (Jesus of Nazareth, the fisherman Peter, the rug weaver Paul, and Maria, the mother of that Jesus). This is very curious: Rome, without a doubt, has capitulated.[141]

If "the mob," "the herd," had won, and the "lords," the *Herren*,

had been gotten out of the way, this had happened on account of the Jews: "then no nation ever had a more universal mission on this earth."[142] Because "the Jews are the most *catastrophic* people in the history of the world."[143] Just as Christianity would not be comprehensible except against a Jewish background, thus Jesus and Saint Paul were, albeit in different ways, figures of Israel. "A Jesus Christ was only possible in a Jewish landscape."[144] Thanks to that "holy anarchist," that "political criminal," that "redeemer," Israel traveled the "roundabout way" of revenge. If Israel nailed Christ to the cross, it was to make people believe that he was "the antagonist and the destroyer."[145] Who could devise "a bait more dangerous than this?" This is how Nietzsche also interpreted deicide within the politics of Israel, which by falsification would have "Jewified" or "Christianized" the world.[146] He even saw Saint Paul from this perspective:

> Paul, the hatred of the chandala against Rome, against "the world," become flesh, become genius, the Jew, the *eternal* Wanderer par excellence. What he guessed was how one could use the little sectarian Christian movement apart from Judaism to kindle a "world fire."[147]

In *The Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche indicated that Christianity, "sprung from Jewish roots," was a movement contrary to any "morality of breeding, of race, of privilege"; he called it an essentially "anti-Aryan" religion.[148] While he held firmly to the idea of the connection between Judaism and Christianity, he projected it into modernity and, moving through 2,000 years with the same rapidity with which he passed from theological motifs to political motifs, he produced a short circuit: "the profound disdain with which the Christian was treated in the ancient world [. . .] resembles the instinctive aversion that still exists today with regard to the Jews."[149] The play of masks is, in the end, this: behind every Christian there is hidden, albeit unconsciously, a Jew, because every Christian is a convert from Judaism, even if he maintains a more free connection to it; behind every Jew is hidden the threat, which has never gone away, of the Christianization of the world – that is, its "Jewification."

In this aspect, anti-Semitism is a much more superficial phenomenon than the profound hostility toward Jews that goes so

far as to include Christianity. Nietzsche judged anti-Semitism – be it on the part of Wagner, of his own sister Elisabeth, of his brother-in-law Förster, of Burckhart, or of many of the people who surrounded him – to be a morally wrong and politically inadequate response. For Nietzsche, the anti-Semite was subject to the "Semite"; his was a reactive response that made him dependent on those whom he wanted to reject. "An anti-Semite is nothing more than an envious Jew."150 The anti-Semite ends up even sharing the Jew's resentment. "What strikes me about the true enemies of the Jews (such as Wagner) is their affinity with rather than their difference from the Jewish element – it is an enormous jealousy."151 Thus, for Nietzsche, anti-Semitism was a despicable, plebeian attitude.152 Nor did it offer a political vision, because it did not consider Judaism as a whole; it did not grasp its effective threat.

If Israel did not stop winning, if the Jews succeeded in asserting themselves even under the worst conditions, "by means of virtues which one would like to stamp as vices," if they were "the strongest, toughest, and purest race at present living in Europe," then they represented a danger and a trap.153 In line with the philosophers who had preceded him, Nietzsche considered the Jews to be a foreign body in what was often called the "European melting pot." The foreignness of the Jews, which emerged in their every aspect, attested to a failed assimilation. The Jews were not similar to the other European peoples and therefore their future was in question. Nietzsche grasped the urgency of this, but he maintained that an "*adjustment*" would be premature. Nevertheless, in a long aphorism entitled "On the People of Israel" contained in *Daybreak*, he presented the issue in disturbing tones.

> Among the spectacles to which the coming century invites us is the decision as to the destiny of the Jews of Europe. That their die is cast, that they have crossed their Rubicon, is now palpably obvious: all that is left for them is either to become the masters of Europe or to lose Europe as they once a long time ago lost Egypt, where they had placed themselves before a similar either-or.154

Later on in the passage, Nietzsche returned to this alternative: he maintained that "a conquest of Europe, or any kind of act of violence" on the part of the Jews was "unthinkable," and advised a

cautious waiting: “but they also know that at some future time Europe may fall into their hands like a ripe fruit if they would only just extend them.”[155] While on the one hand the threat of a Europe dominated by the Jews was aired, on the other hand there was a stark foreseeing of the loss of a place inhabited for centuries by the Jews.

Europe, like Egypt: a momentous comparison, incongruous, but nonetheless charged with warnings. The Exodus, which Nietzsche saw not as the exemplary liberation of a people, but rather as an expulsion, a departure that could be blamed on the Jews, could be repeated, and that would be the response to their ambitions to dominate Europe. The will to power, cause of the “holy lie” that had guided the Jews throughout the history of the world, would explain the drastic alternative that did not seem to leave room for other ways. Whether conquest or loss, the intention and the responsibility were attributed to the Jews. Nietzsche later returned to this theme, taking up again the alarm that had been sounded by the most radical anti-Semites such as Wilhelm Marr, who accused the Jews of having surreptitiously begun a war against the Germans, and of already speaking openly about the “victory of Judaism.”[156]

> That the Jews *could*, if they wanted – or if they were compelled, as the anti-Semites seem to want – even now predominate, indeed quite literally rule over Europe, is certain; that they are *not* planning and working toward this is equally certain. In the meanwhile they are, rather, wanting and wishing, even with some importunity, to be absorbed and assimilated into Europe.[157]

Was the hypothesis of assimilation credible for Nietzsche? How could it be, if it had already failed? Did a third way open up in the tragic alternative that already presaged the extermination of the Jews? Putting a particular spin on these ambiguous passages, in which a mixing of the “races” is alluded to, some writers have maintained that Nietzsche was leaving a door open for the European Jews. Thus, for example, Yovel speaks about a “creative assimilation.”[158] But in order to clarify this concept, Yovel goes on to say that this would have been a sort of secularization by which the Jews, making reparation for the damage wreaked upon Christianity and therefore transforming their “eternal revenge” into

an “eternal blessing,” could finally immerse themselves in the Dionysian Europe that Nietzsche envisioned.159 But what would these Jews-who-were-no-longer-Jews be, stripped of their Jewishness? And wouldn’t this perhaps be a version at once more ambivalent and more savage of Judaism, but also of Christianity?

Nietzsche did not need to receive suggestions from newly minted anti-Semites. For him, the war had begun many centuries before with the reversal of values and the revolt of the Hebrew slaves. If anything, he felt that the ultimate, decisive conflict was looming. For that matter, what could be more antithetical than the “breeding” of a “new caste” that would rule Europe, and those untouchables who would triumph, with the “Jews at the forefront?”160

Luther’s accusation of the Jews as liars was projected by Nietzsche upon the thread of history, and expanded to the notion of a falsification that was no longer only of the Scriptures, as Luther had asserted, but that assailed Nature, distorted it, altered it, turned it upside-down. The notion of falsification became the key for deciphering the existence of the Jews. In a passage that is perhaps the most philosophically relevant in “The Antichrist,” also because of its resonances and repercussions, Nietzsche wrote:

> The Jews are the strangest people in world history because, confronted with the question whether to be or not to be, they chose, with perfectly uncanny deliberateness, to be *at any price*: this price was the radical *falsification* of all nature, all the naturalness, all the reality, of the whole inner world as well as the outer.161

For Nietzsche, the Jewish people, who wanted to exist for eternity, who had outlived themselves on account of their inordinate connection to life, had stretched out over the centuries in a form of existence that was against Nature. Already falsified *per se*, the Jews had committed the further, more serious sin – that of having introduced falsification, *Fälschung*, into the history of the world: that is, the reversal of values, the imperative of not killing, the morality of slaves. The change that National Socialism felt called upon to put into effect, then, was that of restoring values: if Judaism, even in its most recent version – Christianity – had falsified Nature, determining an extreme degeneration, then it was

necessary to return to Nature – to reverse, so to speak, the previous reversal, and above all to wipe out the falsifiers.162

This change was anything but immediate; nor could the connection between cause and effect hold in this case. But Nietzsche's accusation was ominous, just as his discourse on degeneration, euthanasia, and the elimination of decadent, superfluous individuals had devastating effects.163 This was the inspiration for the bio-political programs of the Nazis. Nietzsche diagnosed the illness and at the same time indicated the regenerative cure for a world that was increasingly aware of being in crisis.

The results of that decisive anti-humanism, of a morality that had been completely discredited, would subsequently be denounced by those who survived the Holocaust. Jean Améry called Nietzsche to account in this way:

> Thus spoke the man who dreamed of the synthesis of the brute with the superman. He must be answered by those who witnessed the union of the brute with the subhuman; they were present as victims when a certain humankind joyously celebrated a festival of cruelty, as Nietzsche himself has expressed it – in anticipation of a few modern anthropological theories.164

What Nietzsche ultimately passed along to Hitler and his plan was, as is well known, a brutal, direct jargon, completely devoid of irony and subtlety. Yet the impulse to radical experimentation remained – the savage impulse that can ignore any taboo that has never fallen before; in this apocalyptic scenario, extermination became thinkable.

6 Lies and Fakery: The Non-being of the Jew in *Mein Kampf*

Although he is known more for having burned books than for having read them, Hitler did possess a sizable library that included, among other things, works by historians, writers of fiction, poets, playwrights, and, last but not least, philosophers. The exponents of idealism, particularly Fichte, were present; but an important place was also held by Nietzsche and Schopenhauer – the latter was perhaps Hitler's favorite philosopher. Hitler read during the

nighttime hours and followed a "mosaic" technique by which he appropriated for himself what he found in the books he was reading in order to fill in missing "tesserae."[165]

Midway between propaganda and autobiography, *Mein Kampf* was for a long time considered to be a collection of empty banalities or insane rants. This impeded a serious consideration of this "forbidden book" and contributed to the image of Hitler as the personification of absolute Evil – beyond reason and outside of history.[166] But if this were the case, then it would not be possible to understand the strong influence that Hitlerism had on the intellectuals, jurists, and philosophers of the time, "even on a great mind like Martin Heidegger."[167] Usually when *Mein Kampf* is cited, it is done in an imprecise way, without knowing its content.

The question is hermeneutic: would it make sense to understand Hitler, with all the resulting ambiguity that would lead perilously to understanding? But to understand Hitler does not mean to justify him, much less to share his ideas. Much more perilous is the conviction, still quite widespread, that the deeds and misdeeds of the Third Reich were not guided by any ideas – or at least not by an idea that could be taken seriously. This approach presumes to already know the Nazi ideology in its essence; it condemns the Third Reich's "racism" often without even knowing what Hitler meant by the word "race."[168] Thus, it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to respond to certain questions: Why did Hitler think that it was necessary to wipe the Jewish people off the face of the earth? Why did he identify Jews as the absolute enemy? For Hitler, who were the Jews?

The concept of the "will to power" delineated by Nietzsche, the theory of social evolution of Herbert Spencer, the biological paradigms that regard the human race as a group of different species, came together in a notion of Nature in which, for Hitler, the life instinct was decisive. This instinct not only is affirmed in self-preservation; it also strives for a bettering of life and its products. It therefore favors Nature, which, in Hitler's conception, was a sort of hyper-subject capable of ruling and of achieving a progress characterized by struggle and selection. Like the animal species, thus also should the human species function. Biological racism is summed up in the claim that human beings are divided

into species. For Hitler, every species, every *Art*, should be closed, should safeguard not only its internal homogeneity but also its difference from the other species; above all, it should avoid any *Vermischung*, any mixing or cross-breeding, because the mixing of animal species, like that of the human "races," would cause degradation. In fact, what should prevail should be that which by nature is superior – thus, also the superior "races." Whoever attempted to rebel against this "ironclad logic of nature" would undermine the foundations of existence. For Hitler, the idea that a human being could and should overcome Nature was a "foolish impudence" on the part of the "Jewish pacifists."[169]

Nevertheless, it should not be believed that Hitler sustained a biological determinism, both because he believed that the will was always decisive and because his concept of "race" was more complex and above all had to do with the "way of thinking," the *Art des Denkens*. This emerges clearly when, in the chapter of *Mein Kampf* entitled "Volk und Rasse" (People and Race), the two antagonistic races – Aryan and Jewish – are described. "The enemy is the personification of our problem" – this famous saying of Theodor Däubler, taken up by Carl Schmitt, expresses both the contrast and the complementarity of the two figures.[170] The Aryan stands out against the dark background of the Jew, but in the final end he would also be unimaginable without the Jew; all of the characteristics of the latter are projected in a positive way upon the Aryan.[171]

For Hitler, the phylogenic question – the question of which race has contributed to the foundation of human culture – was an idle one; much more important for him was the ontogenetic question – which race showed those peculiarities that made it the race *par excellence* of the *Begründer*, the "founders" of culture, of art, of science, of human values. For him, the Aryan was the "Prometheus of mankind," who, in the revolt against the gods, had acquired divine attributes that made him the prototype of genius and creativity. In short, for Hitler, the trait that characterized the Aryan was the originality of *arche*, the capacity to establish or initiate things. He believed that it was from the Aryan race that "the foundation and the walls of all human creation originate."[172] This was the basis of Western culture: "Hellenic spirit and

Germanic technique," destined to soon spread everywhere.173 In fact, Hitler outlined a hierarchy: alongside the founders of culture were the "bearers of culture" and the "destroyers of culture." The bearers were, for example, the Japanese – representatives of an Asian Orient, apparently controllable, whose distant alterity was not as disturbing as the otherness of the Jews, who were so close by.

The supremacy of the Aryan race for Hitler did not depend "on a greater potentiality of the instinct of self-preservation," but rather on the way in which the Aryan expressed "his will." His greatness resided in the "idealism" that impelled him to place all of his aptitudes at the service of the collectivity – including the "sacrifice of his own life for others."174 Looking at the inexorable cycle of history, which always moves from a dawn to a sunset, the *Herrenvolk* or master race could maintain its dominance only if it kept the purity of its "blood," the metaphor for its identity.175

For Hitler, the Jew, who had not changed his essence over the course of the centuries, was characterized by the lack of *arche*: he had neither originality, nor creativity, nor genius. He did not know how to establish anything – in fact, all he knew how to do was destroy. He was the prototype of the destroyers. Upon careful consideration, the Jew had nothing of his own; what he possessed was only a loan. In this sense, he was "without any true culture."176 "The Jew takes over foreign culture, only imitating, or rather, destroying." He is "the imitator"; "his intellect" is "only a destructive one."177

Contrary to what was generally believed, the Jews – Hitler stated – were not even nomads, because the nomad "possesses a definitely limited territory," on the basis of which he has been able to create a culture. The Jew, instead, devoid of land and of any property, drags himself through a "parasitic" existence, to the detriment of other peoples. If the Jew emigrates, it is because he is expelled by the autochthonous people who banish him the moment that they remove the veil that allows him to dissimulate.178

And yet the Jew, without property and without qualities, who has everything on loan and therefore in a fictitious ownership, and who is only able to imitate, eludes definition.179 In what would his essence consist, if it is constantly said what he is not – and what he

pretends to be?

To define what a Jew is, Hitler evoked Schopenhauer's definition: "the Jew is the great master of lying." Indeed, for Hitler, lying was a hallmark of the Jew's very "existence."180 The Jew pretends to *be* what he *is not* – he dissimulates, he deceives. In this *non-being* imputed to the Jew, there was already contained the condemnation that would lead to annihilation.

There emerged a difficulty – not only of defining what a Jew is, but also of coming to terms with Judaism in all of its complexity. The Jew led his host population to believe that Judaism was a religion and that it should therefore be tolerated as a different faith. But how could it be a religion if the Jews did not believe in the immortality of the soul? "Indeed, the Talmud is not a book for the preparation for the life to come, but rather for a practical and bearable life in this world."181 Thus, Hitler again hurled the accusation that went back at least all the way to Kant – that Judaism was not a religion. If this were so, then it could have nothing in common with the "spirit of Christianity" – as shown by the "founder of the new doctrine."182

In reality, for Hitler, the Jew did not belong to any religious faith, but rather to a "people" – and not to just any people, but to a people who had mysteriously survived for centuries, despite having gone through "the most terrible vicissitudes." What Hitler saw at work here was an "obstinate will to live" that seemed to elicit in him admiration, envy, and fear, all at the same time. Would the Aryans – the master race – succeed in securing their place in history, as that race of slaves had done?

It was therefore necessary to discover the mystery of that annoying survival, the arcane secret of Judaism. It was a question of blood: the Jews' boasting about being the chosen people was merely a strategy that they pursued by maintaining their own internal homogeneity while undermining the identity of other peoples. Thus, the Jews, by means of deceit, sabotaged Nature and corrupted all of culture. This was a decisive step: if previously the Jews had been poisoners of water, now they became poisoners of blood. The Jew "poisons the blood of others."183 The racism imputed to the Jews would thus justify the defensive racism that Hitler maintained the Aryans should adopt in order to "protect"

their own blood.

The ability to blend in, which had enabled the Jews to become assimilated, was achieved through the use of language. The Jews had passed themselves off as something that they were not: Frenchmen, Italians, Englishmen, and so on. And recently they had even managed to pass themselves off as Germans. But, for Hitler, the Jew who spoke German remained a Jew: behind the language that he spoke, his thoughts were still Jewish. The Jew was a polyglot; he could switch from one language to another. But as soon as he had reached his goal, he would speak a "universal language" – for example "Esperanto."[184] So, what was his goal?

Just as his essence was undefinable from a theological perspective, so was it elusive from a political point of view. The Jews did not know what idealism was; the principle that dominated them was egoism. They did not know order, they did not obey – they did not have an *arche*. They came together occasionally, according to a tribal code of conduct. They did not wage war. They eluded honest confrontation and, dissolving boundaries, they endangered the friend–enemy schema. The Jew was a disguised, invisible enemy – the most dangerous enemy of all. Because of their egoism, and above all because they had no land of their own, the Jews did not know how to form a state.[185] But this did not mean that they did not have political ambitions.

Outside of the cycle of the phases of history, and in contrast to Nature, the Jews traveled an uphill road whose goal had already appeared evident to Hitler at the time when he was a student in Vienna: "Had this race, which always had lived only for this world, been promised the world as a reward?"[186] The two ways to conquer the world were Zionism and Marxism. Given that for Hitler the Jews were a "foreign people" – *Fremde* (aliens) – and given that they were *quer* (queer – literally, "perverse" or "athwart"), compared to others, by Zionism they meant that "the new national self-consciousness of the Jew finds satisfaction in the creation of a Palestinian State"; but in this way, they "again most slyly dupe the stupid goiim [*sic*]," because "they have no thought of building up a Jewish State in Palestine, so that they might perhaps inhabit it." In fact, they were incapable of maintaining a spatially determined state because of their anarchical, tribal

tendencies. “They only want a central organization of their international world cheating, endowed with prerogatives, withdrawn from the seizure of others: a refuge for convicted rascals.”187 That “refuge” – usurped, given that there is no place in the world for the Jews, who could be accused of illegitimately “occupying” others’ territory everywhere – would be a place, by definition, without boundaries, which, by putting the balance of the world in a precarious situation, would be a prelude to Jewish domination of the whole planet.

Even more to be feared was Marxism, in which Hitler saw the Jewish ideology *par excellence*. While on the one hand they had taken over capital, which breaks down national barriers, on the other hand the Jews incited the proletariat; they stirred up the members of the working class, encouraging them in the struggle against capitalism. Internationalism opened the way to revolution, as had occurred in Russia, where the Jewish intelligentsia had influenced millions of workers; it was nothing less than the last step toward Jewish domination of the world.188 At the end of Chapter XI of *Mein Kampf*, as he was describing the impending worldwide conflict that would go beyond geopolitical frontiers and take the form of a meta-historic, metaphysical conflict, Hitler assigned the Aryans the task of stopping the Jews’ rise to world domination. But the end was looming. And if the Aryan people, called to dominate the world, should fail, then they would lose the right to their earthly existence: “What is important for the earth’s future is [. . .] whether Aryan humanity maintains itself or dies out.”189

Here Hitler was already pre-announcing his so-called *Nero-Befehl* (Nero Decree) of March 19, 1945, which he issued before committing suicide in his bunker. The Nero Decree was Hitler’s order to destroy all of the infrastructures and means of subsistence of the Third Reich, so that no Aryan – or rather, no German – would be able to survive Germany’s defeat.

Notes

1. Paul Celan, “Conversation in the Mountains,” in *Selections*, trans. Pierre Joris (Berkeley: University of California Press,

2005), 149–52.

2. “Julius Streicher Gives Evidence at Nuremberg (1946),” AlphaHistory. com: http://alphahistory.com/holocaust/julius-streicher-evidence-nuremberg-1946.

3. On this debate in Germany, see Heinz Kremers, Leonore Siegele-Wenschkewitz, and Bertold Klappert, eds., *Die Juden und Martin Luther. Martin Luther und die Juden* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1985).

4. St. Aurelius Augustine, *Expositions on the Psalms*, Psalm 59 §18, ed. Ted Hildebrandt: https://faculty.gordon.edu; see also Augustine, *City of God,* trans. Henry Bettenson (London: Penguin, 2003), §12, 5. On Christian anti-Judaism, see Piero Stefani, *L’antigiudaismo. Storia di un idea* (Rome and Bari: Laterza, 2004), 3ff.

5. Martin Luther, “That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew,” trans. Walther I. Brandt, in *Luther’s Works: The Christian Society II*, vol. XLV, ed. Helmut T. Lehmann, Harold J. Grimm, et al. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1962), 199–229. See also Gianluca Solla, “La contesa: Lutero, gli ebrei, la Scrittura,” in *Teologia politica 1. Teologie estreme?*, ed. Riccardo Panattoni and Gianluca Solla (Genoa: Marinetti, 2004), 53–74.

6. Martin Luther, *On the Jews and Their Lies*, trans. Martin H. Bertram: http://christogenea.org.

7. Ibid., 48.

8. Ibid., 10, 36, 49.

9. Ibid., 18, 11, 16, 19.

10. Ibid., 4, 6.

11. Ibid., 63.

12. Ibid., 64.

13. See Johannes Brosseder, *Luthers Stellung zu den Juden im Spiegel seiner Interpreten: Interpretation und Rezeption*

von Luthers Schriften und Äußerungen zum Judentum im 19. und 20 Jahrhundert vor allem im deutschsprachigen Raum (Munich: Hueber, 1972); Lucie Kaennel, *Lutero era antisemita?* trans. Marilì Cammarata (Turin: Claudiana, 1999).

14. Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 253ff.

15. Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, trans. Mary J. Gregor (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1974), 77; Arthur Schopenhauer, *Parerga and Paralipomena,* vol. II, trans. E. F. G. Payne (Oxford University Press, 2001), 357; Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Antichrist," in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. Walter Arnold Kaufmann (New York: Viking Press, 1972), §26, 596.

16. For an excellent reconstruction, see Norman C. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 124ff.

17. Voltaire, *Juifs: Il manifesto dell'antisemitismo moderno a cura del padre della tolleranza*, trans. Ulisse Jacomuzzi, ed. Elena Loewenthal (Milan: Claudio Gallone Editore, 1997).

18. Hannah Arendt, *The Jewish Writings*, ed. Jerome Kohn and Eron H. Feldman (New York: Schocken Books, 2007), 3.

19. See Christian Wilhelm von Dohm, *Concerning the Amelioration of the Civil Status of the Jews* (Cincinnati, OH: Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, 1957).

20. Paul Lawrence Rose, *German Question / Jewish Question: Revolutionary Antisemitism from Kant to Wagner* (Princeton University Press, 1990), 62ff.

21. It was not by chance that in 1787 the theologian and Orientalist Johann Gottfried Eichhorn introduced for the first time the term "Semite" into the study of languages, from which the word

“anti-Semite” would later be derived.

22. This accusation, developed by Kant, was taken up again by Hitler.

23. Moses Mendelssohn, *Jerusalem, or, On Religious Power and Judaism*, trans. Allan Arkush (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1983), 208–9.

24. Benedictus de Spinoza, *Theological–Political Treatise*, trans. Michael Silverthorne and Jonathan Israel (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 214ff.; see also Donatella Di Cesare, “‘De Republica Hebraeorum’: Spinoza e la teocrazia,” *Teoria* 2 (2012): 213–28.

25. See also David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2014), 387–413.

26. Johann Gottfried von Herder, *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, trans. T. Churchill (Charleston, SC: Creative Space Books, 2016), 280.

27. Ibid., 283.

28. See Jakob Katz, “‘A State within a State’: The History of an Anti-Semitic Slogan,” in *Emancipation and Assimilations: Studies in Modern Jewish History* (Farnborough: Gregg, 1972), 47–76. The first use of this topos was found by Katz in the treatise *Observations d’un Alsacien sur l’affaire présent des Juifs d’Alsace*, published anonymously by François Hell in Strasbourg in 1779.

29. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Beitrag zur Berichtigung der Urtheile des Publicums über die französische Revolution*, in *Werke*, vol. VI (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1971), 149ff.

30. Ibid., 150.

31. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, “The Characteristics of the Present Age,” in *The Popular Works of Johann Gottlieb Fichte*, vol. II, trans. William Smith (Charleston, SC: BiblioBazaar, 2009), 108ff.

32. Fichte, *Address to the German Nation*, trans. Isaac Nakhimovsky (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2013), 70.

33. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. and ed. Mary Gregor (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 133.

34. Yirmiyahu Yovel, *Dark Riddle: Hegel, Nietzsche and the Jews* (Albany: State University of New York, 1998), 10.

35. Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason,* trans. Allen Wood (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 162ff.

36. Bettina Stangneth instead attributes Kant's prejudices to a lack of attention to the themes that should have been the most important for him, in "Antisemitische und Antijudaische Motive bei Kant? Tatsachen, Meinungen, Ursachen," in *Antisemitismus bei Kant und anderen Denkern der Aufklärung*, ed. Horst Grontke, Thomas Meyer, and Barbara Nesser (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2001), 11–124, and particularly 69ff.

37. Even more paradoxical is the fact that the code of duty of the Nazis was Kantian in nature. See Joshua Halberstam, "From Kant to Auschwitz," *Social Theory and Practice* 14 (1998): 41–54.

38. Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, 130.

39. This passage from Kant presented a problem above all for the Kantian Jews of the twentieth century, from Hermann Cohen to Julius Guttmann. See, in particular, Julius Guttmann, *Kant und Judentum* (Leipzig: Fock, 1908).

40. Kant's reproach was specific – the Jewish population "in its stiffneckedness [. . .] wanted to make a political and not a moral concept of this messiah [*sic*]": ibid., 140.

41. Ibid., 130–1.

42. Ibid., 131.

43. On the notion of a "counterfeit service," *Afterdienst*, see ibid., 162ff.

44. Ibid., 132.

45. Ibid., 162.

46. Ibid., 137, 132–3.

47. Michael Mack, *German Idealism and the Jew: The Inner Anti-Semitism of Philosophy and German Jewish Responses* (University of Chicago Press, 2003), 24.

48. Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, trans. and ed. Robert Louden (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 100.

49. "The harshest antisemite [*sic*] of all" – wrote Otto Weininger – "was probably Kant, judging from the note to §44 of his *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*." See Otto Weininger, *Sex and Character: An Investigation of Fundamental Principles*, trans. Ladislaus Löb (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005), 416.

50. On this constriction of the Jews to being usurers, see Jacques Le Goff, *Your Money or Your Life: Economy and Religion in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998).

51. On the echoes of Kant's morality in capitalism, see Walter Benjamin's fragment "Capitalism as Religion," trans. Chad Kautzer, in *Selected Writings*, vol. I, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 259–62.

52. Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge University Press, 1998), §16, 54.

53. Immanuel Kant, *The Conflict of the Faculties*, cited in Susan Meld Shell, *Kant and the Limits of Autonomy* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 2009), 248.

54. Ibid.

55. G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Arnold V. Miller (Oxford University Press, 1977), 206.

56. Franz Kafka, *The Trial*, trans. Breon Mitchell (New York: Schocken Books, 1998), 216.

57. Mack, *German Idealism and the Jew*, 53.

58. Rosenkranz wrote that Judaism tormented Hegel for his entire life, "like an obscure enigma": Karl Rosenkranz, *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegels Leben* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftlich Buchgesellschaft, 1969). The expression "obscure enigma" is cited in Nathan Rotenstreich, *Jews and German Philosophy: The Polemics of Emancipation* (New York: Schocken Books, 1984), 115.

59. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 206.

60. Falkenheim spoke about this "defect" in Hegel's system: Emil F. Falkenheim, "Hegel and Judaism: A Flaw in the Hegelian System," in *The Legacy of Hegel: Proceedings of the Marquette University Hegel Symposium 1970*, ed. J. J. O'Malley, K. W. Algozin, H. P. Kainz, and L. C Rice (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973), 161–85. In this case, as in the case of Kant, the Jewish philosophers who, beginning with Nachman Krochmal, were influenced by Hegel attempted to temper his vision of Judaism.

61. Yovel, *Dark Riddle*, 98ff.

62. But on Hegel's complicated relationship with Christianity, see Karl Löwith, "Hegels Aufhebung der christlichen Religion," in *Vorträge und Abhandlungen: Zur Kritik der christlichen Überlieferung* (Stuttgart: Max Weber, 1966), 54–96.

63. Cited in Thomas A. Lewis, *Religion, Modernity, and Politics in Hegel* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 36.

64. G. W. F. Hegel, "The Positivity of the Christian Religion," trans. T. M. Knox, in *Early Theological Writings* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 67–179, 68–9.

65. Ibid., 180, 69. See also G. W. F. Hegel, *Life of Jesus*, trans. Michael George (University of Manchester, 1981).

66. Hegel, “The Positivity of the Christian Religion,” 70.

67. Ibid., 146.

68. Ibid., 147, 146.

69. Ibid., 149 (italics are mine). The question echoes one posed by Friedrich Gottlob Klopstock: “Is Achaia, then, the fatherland of the Teutons?”

70. The fact that Hegel did not intend to publish this essay does not change the judgment of this text.

71. G. F. W. Hegel, “The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate,” trans. T. M. Knox, in *Early Theological Writings*, 182–281.

72. Because of this conflict, and of its connection with “strange essences,” for Hegel the “great tragedy of the Jewish people is no Greek tragedy; it cannot elicit pity, but only ‘horror’”: ibid., 203–4.

73. Ibid., 185.

74. Ibid., 186.

75. Ibid., 187.

76. Ibid., 189, 190.

77. Ibid., 191.

78. Ibid., 192.

79. Ibid., 198.

80. Ibid., 194, 197.

81. Leviticus 25: 23.

82. Hegel, “The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate,” 197.

83. Jacques Derrida, *Glas*, trans. John P. Leavey and Richard Rand (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 53.

84. Hegel, "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate," 198.

85. Ibid., 192.

86. Derrida, *Glas*, 49.

87. Hegel, "The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate," 193.

88. See Nathan Rotenstreich, "Hegel's Image of Judaism," *Jewish Social Studies* 15 (1953): 30–52; see also Rotenstreich, *The Recurring Pattern: Studies in Anti-Judaism in Modern Thought* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963); Otto Poggeler, "Hegel's Interpretation of Judaism," *Human Context* 6 (1974): 523–60. In his paper "Hegel und das Judentum" in *Hegel-Jahrbuch* 19 (2013): 28–35, Martin Arndt insists on a more dialectical vision of Judaism on the part of the mature Hegel.

89. G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, vol. I, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford University Press, 1988), 478.

90. G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, trans. John Sibree (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2004), 195.

91. Ibid., 196.

92. Ibid., 197.

93. G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion: The Lectures of 1827*, 2 vols., trans. R. F. Brown, P. C. Hodgson, and J. M. Stewart (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 358.

94. Ibid., 371, 359, 274, 451, 372.

95. Ibid., vol. II, 155. See also Tacitus, *Historiae*, 5, 5. It is interesting to note Hegel's use of the Hebrew–Yiddish word *goyim* to indicate the Gentiles, the non-Jews.

96. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, vol. II, 373.

97. Spinoza, *Theological–Political Treatise*, ed. Francesco

Cordasco, trans. R. H. M. Elwes (New York: Dover, 2004), 237ff.

98. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, vol. II, 448.

99. Ibid., 160.

100. On the impossibility of including the Jews in the Trinitarian schema, see Hans Liebeschütz, *Das Judentum im Deutschen Geschichtsbild von Hegel bis Max Weber* (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1967), 40.

101. Derrida, *Glas*, 47.

102. Ibid., 80.

103. Ibid., 56.

104. Joseph Cohen, *Le spectre juif de Hegel* (Paris: Galilée, 2005), 184.

105. Emmanuel Levinas, *Difficult Freedom: Essays on Judaism*, trans. Séan Hand (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 236.

106. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, trans. and ed. Christopher Middleton (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1990), 346.

107. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, trans. Anthony M. Ludovici, ed. Oscar Levy (New York: Doubleday, 1921), 178–9.

108. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. W. Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), 500ff.

109. It was Heidegger who maintained, in his course on Schelling in 1936, that Nazism was the most radical attempt to overcome nihilism in the wake of Nietzsche. See Heidegger, *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1985), 22ff.

110. György Lukács, *The Destruction of Reason*, trans. Peter Palmer (London: Merlin, 1980), 752–3.

111. Walter A. Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton University Press, 2013).

112. Alfred Baeumler*, Nietzsche, der philosoph und politiker* (Leipzig: P. Reclam, 1937), 157ff.

113. Steven E. Aschheim, *The Nietzsche Legacy in Germany: 1890–1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

114. George Lichtheim, *Europe in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972), 186ff.; Conor Cruise O'Brien, *The Siege: The Saga of Israel and Zionism* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986), 59.

115. Thomas Mittmann, *Vom "Günstling" zum "Urfeind" der Juden: die antisemitische Nietzsche-Rezeption in Deutschland bis zum Ende des Nationalsozialismus* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2006), 181–2.

116. For a reconstruction of this debate, see Massimo Ferrari Zumbini, *Nietzsche: storia di un processo politico, dal nazismo alla globalizzazione* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2011). An overview of Nietzsche's reception in the Jewish world is offered in the volume *Jüdischer Nietzscheanismus*, ed. W. Stegmaier and D. Krochmalnik (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1997).

117. Jacques Derrida, *The Ear of the Other: Otobiography, Transference, Translation: Texts and Discussions with Jacques Derrida*, trans. Peggy Kamuf, ed. Christie McDonald (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 30–1.

118. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Thomas Common (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2006), §125, 90; §109, 82.

119. Ibid., §109, 82.

120. Yovel, *Dark Riddle*, 152ff.

121. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin Books, 1990), §52, 79. See also Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, in *The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Francis Golffing (New York: Doubleday, 1956), §23, 147–299.

122. Friedrich Nietzsche, "The Antichrist," in *The Portable Nietzsche*, trans. and ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Viking Press, 1954), §25, 594.

123. Nietzsche was influenced in this interpretation by the biblical scholar Julius Wellhausen.

124. Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, §7, 167–8.

125. Ibid., §10, 170–1.

126. Nietzsche, "The Antichrist," §26, 595–6.

127. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All-Too Human Parts One and Two*, trans. Helen Zimmern and Paul V. Cohn (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2006), §475, 204.

128. Nietzsche, "The Antichrist," §24, 593.

129. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §251, 182. A very different interpretation is offered in the volume *Nietzsche e gli ebrei*, ed. Vivetta Vivarelli (Florence: Giuntina, 2011). On the international debate, see Jacob Golomb, ed., *Nietzsche and Jewish Culture* (London: Routledge, 1997).

130. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente 1880–1881* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1967), KGW V.1, 352 (1 [73]), 410 (3 [128]).

131. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §251, 181–2. This reference is to the Eastern Jews, for whom Nietzsche expressed repugnance also in other writings: "We would no more choose the first Christians to associate with than Polish Jews" ("The Antichrist," §46, 625).

132. Nietzsche, "The Antichrist," §44, 622.

133. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §135, 94.

134. Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente 1887–1888* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1970), KGW VIII.2, 167 (10 [79]).

135. Hegel, too, believed that the Jews won without combat, and this *topos* was subsequently taken up by other writers.

136. Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, §16, 185. On this theme, see also Aharon R. E. Agus, "'Rom gegen Judäa, Judäa gegen Rom,' Friedrich Nietzsches Religionkritik und die Auslegung rabbinischer Quellen," in *Jüdischer Nietzscheanismus*, ed. Stegmaier and Krochmalnik, 345–62.

137. Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, §16,1 85. Here Nietzsche was quoting Tacitus, *Annals*, XV, 44.

138. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §195, 118. See also Tacitus, *Historiae*, V, 8.

139. Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente 1880–1881*, KGW V.1, 382 (3 [20]).

140. Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, §7, 281.

141. Ibid., §16, 300–1.

142. Ibid., §9, 169.

143. Nietzsche, "The Antichrist," §24, 593.

144. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §137.

145. Nietzsche, "The Antichrist," §27, 599; *Genealogy of Morals*, §8, 169.

146. Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, §8, 169.

147. Nietzsche, "The Antichrist," §58, 649. By "chandala," Nietzsche, referring to the Indian caste system, meant those who are excluded from all the castes, the untouchables. This term inspired the novella by August Strindberg, *Tschandala: A Novella*, trans. Peter Graves (Norwich: Norvik Press, 2007).

148. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. and ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Viking Books, 1954), §4, 504.

149. Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente 1887–1888*, KGW VIII.2, 177f. (10 [96]).

150. Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente 1888–1889*, KGW VIII.3, 387 (21 [7]); see also *Nachgelassene Fragmente 1881–1882*, KGW V.2, 495 (12 [116]).

151. Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente 1881–1882*, KGW V.2, 495 (12 [116]).

152. Heidegger also took the same stand.

153. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §251, 148.

154. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge University Press, 1997), §205, 121.

155. Ibid., §206, 125.

156. Wilhelm Marr, *Der Sieg des Judenthums über das Germanenthum* (Bern: Costenoble, 1879). The myth of a Jewish plot to take over Europe was constructed around this theme. See chapter III, sections 3 and 20 below.

157. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §251, 182–3.

158. Yovel, *Dark Riddle*, 175ff. and 180ff.

159. Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, §205, 125.

160. Nietzsche, *Nachgelassene Fragmente 1888–1889*, KGW VIII.3, 332 (18 [3]).

161. Nietzsche, "The Antichrist," §24, 592.

162. On the radicalization of Nazi politics, see Hans D. Sluga, *Heidegger's Crisis: Philosophy and Politics in Nazi Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 29ff.

163. See Kurt Rudolf Fischer, "Nazism as Nietzschean 'Experiment,'" *Nietzsche-Studien* 6 (1977): 116–22.

164. Jean Améry, *At the Mind's Limits: Contemplations by a Survivor on Auschwitz and Its Realities*, trans. Sidney Rosenfeld and Stella P. Rosenfeld (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 680.

165. See Timothy W. Ryback, *Hitler's Private Library: The Books that Shaped His Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008), 105ff.

166. From the end of the Second World War until 2016, *Mein Kampf* was a forbidden book in Germany; it could only be read under supervision, although it was not difficult to obtain thanks to illegal reprints and websites outside of Germany.

167. Barbara Zehnpfennig, *Adolf Hitler: Mein Kampf. Studienkommentar* (Munich: Fink UTB, 2011), 9. Yvonne Sherratt reconstructs the figure of Hitler within the context of philosophy: Sherratt, *Hitler's Philosophers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014). In his much-discussed and highly debatable biography *Hitler* (translated from the German by Richard and Clara Winston [New York: Harcourt, Inc., 1974]), Joachim C. Fest attempted to deduce Hitler's thinking and his political program from *Mein Kampf*. For a historical profile, see Ian Kershaw, *Hitler 1889–1936: Hubris* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2014).

168. The risk of not knowing is that of not recognizing – for example, the new forms in which Hitlerism returns. On the theme of "race" in Hitler, see Anne Quinchon-Caudal, *Hitler et les races: essai d'anthropologie nationale-socialiste* (Paris: Berg International Éditeurs, 2013), 73–84.

169. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf: The Official 1939 Unexpurgated Edition*, trans. James Murphy (London: Hurst and Blackett Ltd., 1943): https://archive.org/details/MeinKampf_483. The first volume of *Mein Kampf* dates from 1925, and the second from 1926. On the nature of this work,

see Luigi Zoja, *Paranoia: The Madness that Makes History* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 149ff.

170. Carl Schmitt, *Ex Captivitate Salus: Experiences, 1945–47* (Cambridge: Polity, 2017). On this theme, see chapter III, section 18, below.

171. See Léon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe*, trans. Edmund Howard (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1996), 272ff. See also Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, "The Nazi Myth," *Critical Inquiry* 16, 2 (Winter 1990): 291–312.

172. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 397–8.

173. Ibid., 398.

174. Ibid., 408.

175. Ibid., 406.

176. Ibid., 416.

177. Ibid.

178. The modern Jew, accused of dissimulation, recalls the figure and the story of the biblical Esther. See chapter III, section 15, below.

179. The problem of the definition of what a Jew is would arise later, especially in the judicial sphere, at the time of the establishment of the Nuremberg race laws in 1935.

180. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 420, 421.

181. Ibid., 422.

182. Ibid., 423

183. Ibid., 434.

184. Ibid., 423.

185. Ibid., 416.

186. Ibid., 83.

187. Ibid., 447–8.

188. Ibid., 449–50, “Nation and Race.”

189. Ibid., 827.

III
THE QUESTION OF BEING AND THE JEWISH QUESTION

And Heidegger? Did Heidegger hate the Jews?[1]

1 The Night of Being

The landscape in which the Jew appears in the pages of Heidegger's writings is where the story of Being unfolds. The first volume of the *Black Notebooks* dates from the transitional years, from 1931 to 1938, during which Heidegger also wrote two other decisive works, the *Introduction to Metaphysics* of 1935 and *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*, written between 1936 and 1938. The bitter delusion of Heidegger's rectorate at the University of Freiburg was added to the interruption of *Being and Time*, published in 1927 as the first part of an admittedly incomplete work.

In his *Letter on "Humanism,"* which appeared in 1947, in the aftermath of World War II, it was Heidegger himself, as is well known, who suggested the idea of a *Kehre*, a "turn" or turning point in his reflections, moving away from the fundamental ontology of *Being and Time*, which was focused on being-in-the-world – on the idea of Being understood as an event.[2] But this should not lead us to believe, as has at times happened, that this shift in the orientation of Heidegger's thinking merely designated a circumstance in his life. The word *Kehre* has a philosophical weight that emerged in particular in *Contributions to Philosophy*. The turning point was not only the gesture of a thinker leaving behind one pathway in order to follow the successive one; nor was it solely the motion of thinking that, freeing itself from fixity, reverses, turns around, changes direction, to unfold into Being; much more, this turn was the way in which Being "gave itself." Being itself was *turning*.[3]

In German, *Kehre* can indicate the narrow curve or hairpin turn in

a mountain path, the turning point that marks a change in direction, and a change in altitude – that turning around which is, however, also a progression forward, toward the summit. In this mountainous passage, amid perilous crossroads, paths that are brusquely interrupted, roads that have yet to be dug, a new speculative universe unfolded for Heidegger. Rather than marking a before and an after, the turn marks the direction in which Heidegger's meditations were deepening – the place of his philosophy.

The starting point for *Being and Time* is existence, or rather *Dasein*, the state of being human in its facticity. Among all the entities, Being is the only one capable of posing the question about existence. Heidegger's path followed the projection of Being toward its possibilities, up to the ultimate possibility of no longer being – up to death. But the end of Being cannot be considered the fulfillment of philosophical inquiry, nor therefore the conclusion of the work, ended only by force, and therefore incomplete. Heidegger himself asked whether his orientation had only been unilateral, if that turn toward the authenticity of the *being-toward-the-end* had not attracted his attention to only "*one* of the ends," leaving in the shadows the other term, the "beginning" – that is, birth.[4]

What about the beginning? The provenance of Being? The immemorial wellspring from which there emerges the facticity into which Being is thrown? It is the finiteness of Being that prompts us to reflect on the opening of the beginning; it is its historicity that requires the passage to the history of Being.

But what does the history of Being mean? It is neither a version of history nor – much less – the object of a historiography. *Geschichte* (history) refers to *Geschehen* (occurrence). The history of Being is the occurrence of Being, which continually unfolds in its historical shattering.

In *Being and Time*, the great problem of philosophy – Being – is re-read in the light of its history, in order that this word, so evanescent and mysterious, could be liberated from the metaphysical crystallization that had made the grammatical infinitive "to be" one entity among all the others.[5] Therefore, the history of Being is not ontology. This word – as Derrida observed

in a 1964 lecture – “is going to appear more and more inadequate,” because “not only is Heidegger not here undertaking the foundation of an *ontology* [. . .] – what is at issue here is rather a *destruction* of ontology.”[6]

In the *Black Notebooks*, at the beginning of *Ponderings IV*, which dates from 1934/5, Heidegger availed himself of an orthographic expedient, to which he also returned elsewhere, in order to distance himself from the language of metaphysics and to introduce, with an unprecedented spelling, a new way of understanding Being: no longer *Sein*, but *Seyn* – no longer being, but Beyng. And Heidegger noted the task that awaited him: to “blaze a trail for Beyng *in the concept*.”[7] This meant to follow its unfolding or “becoming.”[8]

The ultimate horizon of the *Black Notebooks* was therefore the question of Being, understood not as a problem but rather as a historical question that demanded an answer from its recipients. The turn in Heidegger’s thinking in the early 1930s was when the question of Being became radicalized in a political sense at the same time that it was being explored more deeply, and consolidated. The more the situation intensified, the more Heidegger seemed, paradoxically, to free himself of impediments and restraints. Much later, in a letter to Hannah Arendt of May 6, 1950, Heidegger recalled that period: “Then there was another shift in 1937/1938, when Germany’s catastrophe became clear to me and this burden became a pressure that enabled me to think through the issue in a more persevering and liberated way.”[9]

The age of metaphysics, which was coming to an end – that long span of time between the early Greek beginning and “the other beginning” that was awaited – was marked not only by the oblivion of Being, but also by its abandonment. Beings as entities no longer seemed to find the link that connected them to Being. With an almost obsessive insistence, Heidegger denounced the *Seinsverlassenheit*, which he meant in a double sense – both as the abandonment of Being, but also as abandonment on the part of Being. As the end approaches, while the way is opened to the other beginning, Being withdraws. Indeed, it can be said that its withdrawal – forgotten, veiled, hidden – is an indication of nihilism achieved, of the ineluctable end of modernity, the final

phase of metaphysics. It was the night of Being.

In *Ponderings VIII*, from 1938/9, Heidegger wrote: “the night belongs to beyng and is not merely an ‘image’ of it.” The night does not render perceptible that which is not perceptible, given that the night is “altogether nothing objective that could be represented – nothing of a being – but instead is an essential occurrence of beyng.”10 The night does not have a negative timbre; it would have, if it were judged to be the negation of the day, just as cold is judged to be the negation of heat. But “Coldness and night are the concealed coffers in which what is simple is preserved from touch.”11 The Being that belongs to the cold of the night, that has withdrawn there to find shelter, awaiting the impending end, is the dark protagonist of the *Black Notebooks*.

2 In An Esoteric Tone . . .

Heidegger must always have had his audience in mind, both as a writer and as a speaker. The differences between his lessons, lectures, seminars, political speeches, letters, essays, interpretations, and works of a speculative nature are conspicuous. Is it possible to hypothesize an esoteric dimension in Heidegger’s philosophy?12 Following a suggestion by Volpi in his Italian translation of *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*, it may be opportune to compare the way in which Heidegger divided his own writings to the criteria by which the *corpus Aristotelicum* has traditionally been subdivided.13 The distinction between exoteric writings – that is, writings destined for the public – and esoteric writings, reserved for the few, marks an initiatory path under the rubric of continuity. In an autobiographical note of 1937/8, “Über die Bewahrung des Versuchten,” appended to his will, *Wunsch und Wille*, Heidegger himself proposed a dividing up of his works that can be summarized in this way:

1. university lecture courses
2. lectures
3. notes for seminars
4. preparatory elaborations concerning the Work

5. ponderings and hints
6. lecture course on Hölderlin (1934/5 semester) and preparatory notes for *Empedocles*
7. *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*[14]

In this hierarchy, in which the *Contributions to Philosophy* would represent the apex – that is, the point closest to the intangible, arcane recesses of Being, the *Black Notebooks*, indicated by Heidegger as "ponderings and hints," occupy the penultimate place before *Contributions to Philosophy*. Heidegger stressed his inclination toward the question, the vastness of the horizon, the immediacy – his ponderings "originated at certain moments," and were impelled by "the thrust of the unceasing striving for the one and only question."[15] The aura that surrounds *Contributions to Philosophy* also wafts around the *Black Notebooks*, enveloping them in secrecy. For that matter, both works, according to Heidegger's own wishes, were intended to be published posthumously. They share a cryptic style that privileges brevity, insistence, repetitiousness – a language bent to the extreme in order to escape the dominion of metaphysics, and finally to reach that sole goal, Being, which seemed almost to grow further away as the initiatory journey reached its apex. But if *Contributions to Philosophy* appears to be more of a philosophical distillation, the *Black Notebooks*, while retaining the same esoteric tone – indeed, precisely because of this – are written with a spontaneous sense of freedom, and deal freely with themes of politics, theology, and philosophy in their inextricable interweaving; they tell the lonely, tragic story of Heidegger and his monumental catastrophe.

3 Anti-Semitism and Never-dispelled Doubts

Well before the publication of the *Black Notebooks*, clues and evidence that raised doubts and fueled suspicions about Heidegger's anti-Semitism had begun to surface. To the scattered accounts of his contemporaries were added several academic documents that had been held back, and then – almost in a crescendo – private letters also came to light. These are non-philosophical writings that Heidegger never intended to have made

public; therefore, their difference with regard to the *Black Notebooks* should not be ignored. And yet, also on account of the continuity of themes, the similarity of tone, and a recurring attitude on the part of Heidegger, the context of these documents represents an essential point of access to the pages of the *Black Notebooks*.

In the winter of 1932/3, before a silence fell between them that would last until 1950, Heidegger sent a last letter to Hannah Arendt, who had expressed her disappointment about the rumors that were circulating.16 It was being said that Heidegger was discriminating against Jews at the university and that he was behaving like an anti-Semite. The word *Jude* (Jew), which had been taboo between Heidegger and Arendt, finally began to appear in their correspondence. Heidegger defended himself by strongly denying and sarcastically rejecting the rumors.

> Dear Hannah!
>
> The rumors that are upsetting you are slanders that are perfect matches for other experiences I have endured over the last few years.
>
> That I supposedly don't say hello to Jews is such a malicious piece of gossip that in any case I will have to take note of it for the future.
>
> As a clarification of how I behave toward Jews, here are the following facts: I am on sabbatical this winter semester and thus in the summer I announced, well in advance, that I wanted to be left alone and would not be accepting projects and the like.
>
> The man who comes anyway and urgently wants to write a dissertation is a Jew. The man who comes to see me every month to report on a large work in progress (neither a dissertation nor a habilitation project) is also a Jew. The man who sent me a substantial text for urgent reading a few weeks ago is a Jew.
>
> The two fellows of the Notgemeinschaft whom I helped get accepted in the last three semesters are Jews. The man who, with my help, got a stipend to go to Rome is a Jew. – Whoever wants to call that "raging anti-Semitism" is

> welcome to do so.
>
> Beyond that, I am now just as much an anti-Semite in university issues as I was ten years ago in Marburg, where, because of this anti-Semitism, I even earned Jacobsthal's and Friedländer's support.
>
> To say absolutely nothing about my personal relationships with Jews (e.g., Husserl, Misch, Cassirer, and others).
>
> And above all it cannot touch my relationship to you.[17]

How did Hannah Arendt react to such a letter? What did she think of the word *Jude* that recurs throughout the text, and with which Heidegger indicated a clear separation between Germans and Jews, between himself and those German Jews, colleagues and pupils, whom he singled out only because they were evidently Jews, and because their number was not insignificant? Certainly, this letter must have contributed to Arendt's decision to leave Germany in August 1933.[18]

Heidegger's defense was so ambiguous that it could be turned around and seen as a self-accusation. Beyond the angry tone in which he declaimed his generous availability and the special favors that he did for Jews, what is most striking in this letter is the way in which he claimed the right to be an "anti-Semite" in university matters. *Enragiert*, angry, rabid, dogged anti-Semitism was one thing, but academic anti-Semitism was another – as if anti-Semitism in the university had a motivation, as if it were rational to the point of not having repercussions on his personal relationships.

These are also the two arguments that even today are used by those who attempt to exonerate Heidegger. The first argument, when its captious reasoning is closely examined, surreptitiously introduces a distinction between militant, biological, racist, Nazi anti-Semitism and cultural and academic anti-Semitism, which is purportedly aleatory and innocuous. The argument goes like this: given that anti-Semitism is biological, and Heidegger did not share this racist ideology, then he cannot be accused of anti-Semitism. The second argument has to do with Heidegger's friends: given that Heidegger had had relationships with Jews for years and for decades, then he could not have been anti-Semitic.[19]

In the Germany of that time, in which more than 350,000 Jews were living, it could not have been easy to avoid having any contact with them.[20] Limits on relationships with Jews began with the measures taken by the Third Reich starting in April 1933, when Jews began to be excluded from holding office, from the public sphere, and – with increasing rapidity – from the general life of the country. But, over and above these measures, even convinced, openly anti-Semitic individuals had no difficulty – as Löwith, for example, recorded – in "making a distinction between 'personal' relationships with Jews and the 'objective' necessities of National Socialist policy."[21] This was the norm also for the jurist Carl Schmitt.[22] This almost schizophrenic situation did not escape an acute observer like Simone Weil, who, while on a visit to Berlin, in a letter dated August 1932, wrote: "anti-semitic and nationalist sentiments don't appear at all in personal relations."[23]

In the universities, and in the intellectual world in general, the Jewish presence was noteworthy.[24] Was this perhaps the cause of an inevitable academic or emotional reaction of anti-Semitism and competitiveness? Was the fear of *Verjudung* – the Jewification of the universities – understandable?

Heidegger used the word *Verjudung* at least twice. In a letter dated October 2, 1929, he warned Viktor Schwoerer, a functionary in the Ministry of Education:

> We are confronted by a crucial choice: Either to infuse, again, our *German* spiritual life with genuine indigenous forces and education, or to be at the mercy, once and for all, of the growing Jewish contamination, both in a larger and a narrower sense.[25]

But many years before, in a letter dated October 18, 1916, to his future wife, Heidegger had written:

> The Jewification of our culture & universities is certainly horrifying & I think the German race really should summon up the inner strength to find its feet again. The question of capital though![26]

In the strict sense, "Jewification" as used here by Heidegger indicates the large number of Jews who were present in the universities at that time; in a broader sense, it refers to the Jewish

contamination of the German spirit. The two meanings – numerical, and spiritual – are obviously connected. The word "Jewification," which was very widespread during those years, had been used by Richard Wagner in his essay "Judaism in Music," published under a pseudonym in 1850.27

From the very first pages of his essay, Wagner sounded a warning about the emancipation of the Jews. *Der Jude* (the Jew) was already "more than emancipated," to the point that now "he rules." Wagner offered as proof the "be-Jewing of modern art," which "springs to the eye."28 For Wagner, emancipation had given rise not to equality, but rather to the dominance of the Jews. To emphasize the reversal of relationships of power, Wagner called for an "emancipation from the yoke of Judaism."29 He thus formulated the basic thesis of modern anti-Semitism which, even in its commonality with Christian anti-Judaism, here was precisely distinguished from it: *Verjudung* was the metaphor for Jewish domination. According to Wagner, European civilization had remained foreign to the Jew, who, in spite of all his efforts to assimilate, even to the point of canceling out his own origins, was ontologically a foreigner in his permanent, immutable nature. Thus, he undermined art, culture, spirit. This Wagnerian vision gave rise to a new, broader category of "Jew," whose negative essence was manifested in his capacity to contaminate with his degeneracy and corruption. But there was more: modernity became "the age of the Jew." The Jews were the ones who were truly responsible for all evils; while, by contrast, Judaism was "the evil conscience of our modern Civilization."30

The theme of *Verjudung*, taken up by Marr, was further developed not only by Düring, but also by Hitler, who in *Mein Kampf* not only complained about the "Jew-infested universities," but also lamented the "Judaization of our spiritual life."31

To speak about *Verjudung*, as Heidegger did on at least two occasions, and at a distance of several years – in 1916 and in 1929 – did not mean being influenced by Christian anti-Semitism, which was still widespread in the Catholicism of the state of Baden, a bastion of Judeophobia's "pious-acting despotism of conscience."32 Rather, it meant to share a vision – perhaps stereotyped, but still a modern one – of Jews and Judaism. Fear of

the presence of Jews in the universities and anxiety about the contamination of "German spiritual life" were inscribed upon an anti-Semitism that identified Jews not as citizens like any others, but rather as non-German, non-autochthonous individuals who were irreparably alien and undesirable. Contact was not necessary for Jewification to occur: the Jew, the font of impurity, was already impure in everything that belonged to him or that participated in his life. There was a Jewish science, a Jewish art, a Jewish music from which one should protect oneself. Thus, there was introduced a separation between the pure and the impure, the sacred and the profane, that would be attested and consolidated by the "sacral" laws of the Third Reich, first and foremost the law of September 15, 1935 "for the protection of the German blood and honor."33

Heidegger also returned to this theme elsewhere in his letters, but without resorting to the use of the word "Jewification." In a letter to his wife dated September 8, 1920, in referring to the volume *Hölderlin und Diotima: Dichtungen und Briefe der Liebe*, edited by the German scholar Rudolf Ibel for the Jewish publishing house Manesse, he wrote:

> Manesse-Hölderlin is so grotesque one can only laugh – one wonders whether from this contamination we'll ever get back to the primordial freshness & rootedness of life again – sometimes one could really almost become a spiritual anti-Semite.34

With several variants, the biological metaphor of contamination, the image of a material poison capable of corrupting and ruining the spirit, returned in a letter sent by Heidegger to Elfride from Freiburg on June 20, 1932:

> What you write about the Jewish paper were my thoughts too. One cannot be too distrustful here [. . .] But as I have written before – however much of an effort the Nazis require of one, it's still better than the insidious poisoning to which we have been exposed in recent decades under the catchwords of "culture" & "spirit."35

The published correspondence between Heidegger and his wife is not complete. But Heidegger's granddaughter Gertrud, who edited her grandfather's letters to her grandmother, maintains that she

included, “to prevent speculations,” all of the letters in her possession that were “written between 1933 and 1938, also including all of the anti-Semitic and political statements referring to Nazism, which on the whole are rare.”36 But the assertion that such statements are rare does not seem to make much sense here – not only because it is not certain that the material is complete, but also because obviously it is not the number of such statements that is the decisive factor.

If we read these letters keeping track of the occurrences of the word *Jude*, a relatively common form of anti-Semitism comes out, constituted of ordinary stereotypes and the usual prejudices. In a letter written in Messkirch on August 12, 1920, Heidegger noted:

> The Luther edition has already become indispensable to me. [. . .] Here there’s a lot of talk about how many cattle now get bought up from the villages by the Jews & how that’ll then be the end of buying meat in winter [. . .] – the farmers are gradually getting insolent up here too & everything’s swamped with Jews & black marketeers.37

According to the most common view, the Jews were hoarders, intriguers skilled in deception, greedy, attached to money, more cultured and competitive than everyone else, supportive of themselves, internationalists, communists. On August 10, 1924, recounting how his colleague Jakobstahl had intrigued to obtain a higher stipend for his assistant, Heidegger exclaimed: “These Jews!” On February 9, 1928, he joked about a brilliant seminar paper by Walter Bauer: “Indeed, the best are – Jews.” On June 9, 1932, he observed that “if the Nazis are still very limited on a cultural – and intellectual – level,” communism, far from being defeated, was destined to become “an enormous power”; “now all of the Jewish intellectuals are going to the other side; it seems that the Berliner Tagblatt has been communist for a year by now.” And he went on: “Each week Trotsky has a 20-pfennig booklet published in Germany, in which he gives his opinion on the situation, makes observations, & points the way forward.” Heidegger did not underestimate the importance of the press: “Baeumler has ordered the Jüdische Rundschau for me, which is excellently informed & of a high standard. I’ll send you the issues.”38

The gesture of discrimination against Jews reappeared in a report on Eduard Baumgarten that had been requested of Heidegger in 1933 by the association of professors in Göttingen. It was Karl Jaspers who denounced Heidegger for this in 1945, pointing out that Heidegger had said that Baumgarten had "frequented, very actively, the Jew Fränkel."[39] But Heidegger defended himself: "party jargon" – saying that Baumgarten's transcription of his report was partial, and that the final version did not correspond to the original.[40]

Much more serious than this document, which has aroused many polemics, was Heidegger's negative judgment, often passed over in silence, regarding Richard Hönigswald. As in other areas of science and culture, there were also many illustrious Jews in the field of philosophy, from Hermann Cohen to Edmund Husserl, from Georg Simmel to Max Scheler. Among the most prestigious exponents of neo-Kantism, Hönigswald had taught for a long time in Breslau, before moving in 1930 to Munich, where on September 1, 1933 he was forced to retire prematurely. For his part, Heidegger speculated about the possibility of taking over Hönigswald's place in that university, which – he confessed in a letter dated September 19, 1933 to his friend Elisabeth Blochmann (who was Jewish, and in the process of emigrating) – was not "isolated" like the University of Freiburg; in that context, he noted in passing another advantage of being in Munich: "the possibility, namely, of approaching Hitler."[41] It is difficult to say whether Heidegger contributed to the forced retirement of Hönigswald from the University of Munich; this is the judgment that he penned on June 25, 1933:

> Hönigswald comes from the Neo-Kantian school that has maintained a philosophy made to order for liberalism. The essence of man is here resolved in a conscience that is freely suspected in the void [*ein freischwebdenes Bewusstein*], and this, in turn, is diluted in a view of the world that is logical and universal [*allgemein logische Weltvernunft*]. Thus, in the guise of a rigorous scientific-philosophical foundation, attention is drawn away from man in his historical rootedness and in that people's tradition [*volkhaft*] that comes from the earth and blood [*seiner Herkunsft aus Boden und Blut*]. This has been accompanied by a conscious

> rejection of any metaphysical questioning, while man is nothing more than the servant of an indifferent universal world culture. From this basic position are derived the writings and certainly also all of the academic activity of Hönigswald.42

At the end of the letter, Heidegger denounced the deceptions to which, according to him, the "dialectical void" of Hönigswald had exposed young people, and he called Hönigswald's appointment to the University of Munich a "scandal," which obviously needed to be rectified.43

On November 10, 1938, during the Kristallnacht, Hönigswald was arrested and taken to the concentration camp at Dachau. He was subsequently released, thanks only to international protests due to his fame as a scholar; he succeeded in emigrating to the United States in December 1939.

4 Metaphors of an Absence

In the *Black Notebooks*, the terms *Jude, jüdisch*, and *Judentum* appear exactly 14 times in the last two volumes – that is, the *Ponderings* that date from 1938 to 1941. One might deduce that the sporadic presence of these words is proof of the marginal nature of a theme that would therefore be, when all is said and done, irrelevant. This would confirm the thesis of those who maintain that those passages "do not contaminate" Heidegger's philosophy.44

Nevertheless, it is necessary to point out that the occurrences of the word *Jude* and its derivatives are part and parcel of the philosophical content in which the history of Being is delineated by Heidegger. Thus, Heidegger was dealing with a theme that was not new in Western philosophy – the theme of the relationship between Being and the Jew.

If the Jew had been recognized from the very beginning as playing a leading role in the dramatic scenario in which the history of Being and the fate of the West were to be decided, how could the silence that seemed to envelop him be explained? The term *Jude* never appears in the numerous indexes of keywords that Heidegger himself compiled and inserted at the end of each

notebook. What is the reason for this omission?

But it would also be legitimate to ask why in the world, in the philosophical works that Heidegger intended for publication, the word "Jew" started appearing in 1937, and why its presence increased exponentially between 1939 and 1941.45 The case is not an isolated one; analogies can be found, for example, in Carl Schmitt's writings, in which anti-Semitic expressions began to surface only in 1933, becoming increasingly frequent during the war years.46 The presence of the word *Jude* attests to the explicit identification of the Jew as the enemy in the planetary war that Germany was fighting.

The strategy adopted by Schmitt, which must have been widespread during those years, was also followed by Heidegger. If the number of passages in which Jews and Judaism are clearly spoken about in the *Black Notebooks* is limited, indirect references are more frequent. By using an anti-Jewish theological vocabulary, citations from Nietzsche, biological metaphors, stereotypes expressed in jargon, and terms from the LTI (*Lingua Tertii Imperii*) – the language of the Third Reich – appropriately translated into his own philosophical idiom, where they acquired a new legitimacy and an unprecedented dignity, Heidegger could refer to the Jews while managing to avoid actually mentioning them. Direct attack had become superfluous. Thanks to the coded language of anti-Semitic rhetoric, Heidegger's insinuations, his implied meanings, his references to the Jews and Judaism, albeit implicit, are easily decipherable.

Thus, there was constituted a direct semantic strategy to support the conceptual network that encircled, delimited, and attempted to define the Jew. And while the Jew remained elusive, escaping definition, Heidegger attempted to capture his essence metaphorically by means of a series of symbols, characters, and prerogatives that would portray this figure. So it was sufficient to evoke just of one those images in order to indicate the figure of the Jew. Thus, the enemy was passed over in silence by systematically refusing to mention him, but without having to do without keeping him in one's sights. This *ante litteram* elimination – almost a sort of exorcism – avoided using the word *Jude* and left it up to the reader to fill in the blanks.

The passages in the *Black Notebooks* in which Heidegger deals with Judaism are therefore much more numerous than the 14 occurrences of the explicit words. These indirect references include words such as *Verwüstung, Entrassung, Entwurzelung, Vorschub, Herdenwesen, Vergemainerung, Rechenfähigkeit, Beschneidung des Wissens, Gemeinschaft der Auserwählter*, and *Unheil* (desertification, deracination, uprooting, abetment, herd mentality, communization, calculative ability, circumcision of knowledge, community of the chosen, and disaster). And the list could go on. The vision of the Jews that Heidegger provided should therefore be read in the context of this broader speculative network.

5 The Jew and the Oblivion of Being

In the Western philosophical tradition, Being was still thought of on the model of simple presence. Raised as early as in Heidegger's *Being and Time*, criticism of this model began to take on more precise outlines in the subsequent years. Heidegger, aware of the weight exerted by that already consolidated mode of conceiving of Being, was driven to question himself about the meaning of metaphysics.

According to the Greek meaning, "metaphysics" indicates the movement of Being that goes *meta* – beyond beings, opening up to Being; if Being encompasses beings, it is because it always transcends them, looking at them in the light of Being, that background from which they stand out.[47] But in Heidegger's works from the 1930s, "metaphysics" acquired a strongly negative meaning. All of Western philosophy, from Plato to Nietzsche, was metaphysics, because it had not been capable of maintaining the gap of that "beyond," placing Being and beings on the same level – that is, Being was thought of as a general entity, obtainable by the observation of what it has in common with all other beings. In this way, Being had been "entified" and therefore forgotten and abandoned. Being was forgotten in favor of beings. And the ontological difference – the difference between Being as existence and being as entity, was thus canceled out. For Heidegger, the history of Being was therefore the history of metaphysics, which had reached its completion in modernity.

In the *Black Notebooks*, while the warning about the oblivion of Being remained, the ontological difference between Being and beings became sharper; it became an extreme dichotomy, a fatal divarication, an incurable contrast. Heidegger viewed the Second World War through the schema of this ontological difference; thus, the war was revealed as the war of Being against beings. The planetary clash that was unfolding over the abyss had a significance that was at once ontological, theological, and political. The history of Being became a narrative told in apocalyptic tones, the story of a final battle, the metaphysical version of Gog and Magog.

If, in the *Black Notebooks*, the fate of Being is entrusted to the Germans – the vanguard of the peoples of Europe – the attempt to gain dominance over beings is imputed to the Jews. According to this view, not only was the Jew, identified with beings, irremediably separated from Being, he was also accused of causing this separation. His fate was in a certain way already sealed: split off from Being, the Jew was coming perilously close to becoming nothing, a fate to which Hegel had already condemned him.

For Heidegger, there was a nexus of complicity between metaphysics and Judaism. If metaphysics in its modern results had paved the way for Judaism, Judaism had known how to exploit this, in turn favoring metaphysics.

> The occasional increase in the power of Judaism is grounded in the fact that Western metaphysics, especially in its modern evolution, offered the point of attachment for the expansion of an otherwise empty rationality and calculative capacity, and these thereby created for themselves an abode in the “spirit” without ever being able, on their own, to grasp the concealed decisive domains.[48]

The nexus was reciprocal. Metaphysics had provided the basis for the empty rationality and calculating thought that, according to Heidegger, were distinguishing characteristics of Judaism.[49] Its “power” was intensified thanks to metaphysics, which had enabled it to deploy itself. On the other hand, that calculating way of thinking, usually nomadic, had found *Unterkunft* (refuge) in *Geist* (the “spirit”); it had insinuated itself, laying waste to and precluding authentic decision – the decision of Being.

The fate of Judaism was linked to the fate of metaphysics; herein lies one of the principle nodes that Heidegger posited. The ultimate, aberrant outcome of modernity, Jewish power was the dominance of beings. Heidegger's condemnation could not have been more crushing. The abyss that opened up imposed the necessity of identifying the Jew as the metaphysical enemy. Heidegger repeated the gesture of exclusion in a much more radical way, carrying it out on the brink of the abyss, in a time of hardship, in the night of the world.

If the dominance of beings blocked access to Being, which was reduced to a simple presence, "squandered in a hodgepodge of rootless concepts," opening the path to Being, in a world that had lost track of its significance, required a radical liberation from those calculating beings who dissimulated the truth and dragged every other being along with them into the vortex of entification, the twilight of Being.50 It was in this way, in fact, that the historiography of beings could arrive at a point where it hid from human sight the history of Being.51 Precisely because it had metaphysical depth, the conflict was epochal. It could not be compared to "the will of a generation versus that of a previous one, not the 'spirit' of a passing century, not the essence of an age versus a forthcoming age, not Christianity versus a new 'religion,' and not two millennia of Western history versus an alien history."52 The conflict, not equivalent to a logical "either-or," was the "decision" between the brazen dominance of beings and the concealed Being.

The word *Feind* (enemy) recurs here – not to ask where the enemy might be, how to attack him, with which arms, according to the usual canons of warfare (even those of National Socialism).53 The metaphysical conflict immediately calls into question the philosopher, the thinker: "an enemy that, without ever abandoning its malevolence, shows itself as *appertaining* to what the thinker must radically *befriend* (the essence of *beyng*)."54 For Heidegger, the philosopher's task was to remain rooted in the soil of Being in order to bring the conflict to light, to disentangle the contrast. Elsewhere, Heidegger was clearer, and even the thin thread of appertaining seemed to be broken. "Beings" – he said, using a metaphor – "constitute a heavy, long-since closed door," which must be "taken off its hinges and forced open, so that

nothingness might appear as the first genuine shadow of Being."[55] Who would dare to say that this step was necessary?

Within the *Seinsfrage* – the question of Being, and therefore the context in which Heidegger posed the question – the *Judenfrage* appears in its abyssal depth, not as a problem of "race," but rather as a metaphysical questioning. In a passage whose gravity seems immeasurable, the question touches upon *Menschentümlichkeit*, the "peculiar humanity" of the Jews, who, *ungebunden* (free of any ties), bring to the world the eradication of Being:

> The question of the role of *world-Judaism* [*Weltjudentum*] is not a racial [*rassisch*] question, but a metaphysical [*metaphysische*] one, a question that concerns the kind of human existence which in an *utterly unrestrained* way can undertake as a world-historical "task" the uprooting of all beings from being.[56]

6 The Greeks, the Germans – and the Jews

Many peoples are called to make an appearance on the stage of world history in the *Black Notebooks*; but the protagonists are the Germans and the Greeks. Their place is established by the axis of Being, projected between the "first beginning," inaugurated by the Greeks, and the "*other* beginning," the mission entrusted to the Germans.[57] The other peoples – Russians, Americans, Chinese, English, Italians – are situated along the pathway of the history of Being. And the Jews?

Already in the Spring of 1932, in his lectures on Anaximander and Parmenides, in asking what the end of metaphysics was, Heidegger had also posed the question about the beginning.[58] If the long Western tradition that had begun with the dawn of Greek thought was nearing its end, dissolved by the monopoly of the sciences and worldwide technology, then perhaps another beginning was possible – indeed, necessary; this did not, however, mean a return to the past, but rather a movement backward to recover from metaphysics and re-emerge to the bright dawn of a new era to come.

In *The Beginning of Western Philosophy*, Heidegger stated that

the West, the *Abend-Land* (the "land of evening"), was not a geographic place, nor a system of values, but rather an epoch in the history of the world – and it was plummeting, in ruins, sinking into the nothingness of European nihilism. That *Untergehen*, that unequivocal death, had been immortalized by the book by Oswald Spengler *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, published in two parts in 1918 and 1922.59 Although he was struck by reading this book, Heidegger had distanced himself from it.60 Could *Untergang* (twilight), really be spoken about? Definitive collapse? The end?

In the *Black Notebooks*, twilight or downfall, *Untergang*, gives way to transition, *Übergang*.61 "*An era of transition*; [. . .] To stand right in the midst and yet to be beyond."62 The darkness of night should not be misunderstood – it is not the obscurity of death, but it is the extinguishing of the last light of evening, so that the light of dawn can shine in the distance.

But who could pass through the cold night of Being? Who could catch sight of the transition, where everyone else saw an ineluctable collapse? Who could follow the pathway to the end, in order to embark upon the pathway to the beginning? Only the Germans. The fate of the West was in their hands. "In the possession of the great legacy of Greek *Dasein*, we can venture the swinging over of a sure spirit into the freely binding inauguration of the future."63 The German *imitatio* was the aspiration for a Greece that did not exist, that had never existed, that could only exist thanks to Germany. It was the mystical, nocturnal Greece, archaic and tragic, purely pagan, extolled by Hölderlin, longed for by Hegel, craved by Nietzsche. Greece was the fatherland, the land of autochthony.

The history of Being was revealed along a path toward the beginning that had remained in reserve for the future of the West. Only the German people were called to take that path. Only the German people were entitled to go beyond metaphysics. Only the German people were the custodians of Being, because, in the wake of Hölderlin, "someone who is German can in an originarily new way poetize Being and say Being."64 This is why the German people had been awaited for so long on the stage of the history of the world – finally to carry out a mission that, in the accelerated

unification of the planet, had become planetary.

"*Halt!* And here is the originary limit of history – not the empty super-temporal eternity – instead, the steadfastness of rootedness."65 For Heidegger, the devastating effects of technology, automation, estrangement, and desertification could only be stemmed by Germany, thanks to the ironclad cohesion of the "people's community," *Volksgemeinshaft*, profoundly rooted in the earth.

The Greek–German connection omitted the Jews; the axis of Being excluded them. There was no longer space for them in the topography of the West, the Land of Evening, which, if it was to reawaken to a new dawn and discover the Land of Morning, could not avoid the question of that metaphysical enemy who, with his very presence, undermined Being from the inside, impeding access to the new beginning.

And yet we must ask ourselves whether this exclusion, which pre-announced a new historicity of Being and a new geopolitical order, did not also target other people, not just the Jews. Was it not perhaps a discriminatory gesture that focused on everyone who was different?

The unity of the West was a theme that had pervaded European culture since the end of the First World War and had become more intense during the 1930s. Heidegger was not the only one to appeal for an extreme salvation, nor was he the only one to discriminate against other peoples. Max Weber contrasted the "Negro from Senegal" with the German people, "a great people of civilization."66

In this way was intensified the dichotomy between the Western and Westernized peoples and those groups of people who, marginalized by the West, excluded from the history of humanity, ran the risk of not being considered human beings.

Not even Husserl was immune from expressing this Eurocentric prejudice: if it was not Germany, but rather the "spiritual Europe," the heir of ancient Greece, that was to carry out "an archontic function for all of humanity," still, certain populations should be rejected – in addition to the oriental and colonial populations, even those non-Europeans who lived on European soil, that is, "the

Indians of the country fairs, or the Gypsies, who are constantly wandering about Europe."[67] This verdict, which considers lack of land and a nomadic lifestyle to be sins, was pronounced in two lectures that had great success, given by Husserl in Vienna on May 7 and 10, 1935, a few months before the Nuremberg Laws were enacted. The universalism of reason did not prevent Husserl from discriminating against non-Europeans. And thus, while the "Papuan," a symbol of primitive man, appeared next to animality, the concept of "human" unfolded ineluctably. According to the traditional definition, in which man is a rational being, a "Papuan" would be a man, not an animal. "Still, just as man (and even a Papuan) represents a new level of animality [. . .] so with regard to humanity and its reason does philosophical reason represent a new level."[68] In the end, for Husserl, the only true human, in the sense of *Kulturmenschheit* (cultured humanity), was the European.

Heidegger circumscribed "historical human beings" or "Western humankind" in a similar way.[69] The only difference would seem to be the different role entrusted to Germany as leader of the Western world. For that matter, during those same years Heidegger said that "the negroes, for example the Bantus [. . .] are outside of history" – that is, within the human sphere, "there can not be history, as in the case of the negroes."[70] Thus, history would not constitute the distinctive determination of being human.

Seen from this perspective, the gesture of discrimination against the Jews would be nothing more than the result of a simple amplification, the worsening of a form of racism that, while the "heart of darkness" that beat in the cultured West was coming into the open and being added to the atavistic hatred for Jews, was becoming anti-Semitism.[71]

But for Heidegger – and not only for him – things were quite different. This appears very clearly in the *Black Notebooks*. Here, Heidegger did not exclude the Jews from the West in the sense that, in a sort of geopolitical hierarchy of the globe – which saw Germany at the center, and then the other Western peoples, and then the Westernized peoples – they could live on the periphery, along with the "Negroes," who had already been excluded from human history since time immemorial.[72] For Heidegger, the Jews were excluded from Being.

The Greek–German axis, which opened up a new historicity, by its very definition could not leave room for the Jew, the adversary, or rather the metaphysical enemy, who, since he had been telling lies for centuries – letting people believe that he was something that he was not, and thus dissimulating Being, concealing it, and favoring the dominance of beings over Being – blocked the way, obstructed the path for the Germans to rise again to a new beginning.

This was not just a matter of discrimination, as happens with the gesture of placing the Other outside of history; rather, it was a matter of facing the enemy in order to decide the history of Being. The conflict had planetary dimensions and ontological depth. If *"the fatherland* [*Vaterland*] *is beyng itself*," then the being-in-the-world of the Jew seemed no longer to have any place, not even a temporary one.73

By means of an irremediable contraposition, which in the *Black Notebooks* becomes increasingly strong, the Jew became the symbol of the end, while the German was the symbol of the beginning. Heidegger saw the Jew as farthest from the beginning, from the pure source of identity, from the wellspring of Being. For Heidegger, this condition of inauthenticity even had a certain element of complacency and intentionality. In a dramatic eschatology, in which Being was in play, the Jew was seen as the ending that does not wish to end. And therefore he repeats, in a vortex that spins on itself, an eternal repetition of the same thing, which, nevertheless, is touted as being new. The repetition requires an acceleration so that it can disguise itself as progress, so as to make what is the same appear to be different, what is old to appear new, on the model of a journalistic chronicle, the paradigm of this eternal return, which promotes the final phase to a permanent state, *Dauerszustand*, and prolongs the finish, the *End*, in endlessness, *Endlosigkeit.*74 "Progress," in all of its possible disguises, is the "idol" with which the unknown fear of the beginning is completely concealed, while the aborted beginning is replaced by pre-existing goals.75 In the absence of decision, progress prolongs the end.76 For Heidegger, there was nothing worse than this endless protraction of the end: "How should the new day arrive, if the night is withheld from it?"77

But the "secret Germany," hidden and disguised, aspired to the

night. This was the Germany that fought beyond the front lines, on the line of Being, and which, ready at any moment to make a decision, awaiting that new beginning, would never lay down her arms, knowing that the desertification brought by Judaism was nothing more than the "aftereffect of an already decided end."[78]

7 The Rootless Agents of Acceleration

A word that recurs in the *Black Notebooks*, above all in the first volume, is *Bodenlosigkeit*, rootlessness or groundlessness, as opposed to *Bodenständigkeit*, dwelling on and being part of the land, which has not only political implications, but also existential implications, given that *Bodenständigkeit* becomes a synonym of stability. Whoever is autochthonous, whoever plants his own roots in the earth, in the *Erde*, in the ancestral mother, has the authenticity that derives from the natural element. *Verwurzelung*, rootedness, is therefore an equally frequent word, which designates the onto-historical condition of one who can resist, can oppose the senseless acceleration with which technology is assailing the planet. Indeed, Heidegger made it clear that "a deeper rootedness" is part of a higher task, a remote goal to which to aspire – that is, the historical greatness of a people that can be attained only through the state.[79] It is not difficult to intuit that Heidegger was thinking of the *Auftrag*, the mission entrusted to the Germans.[80] Thus, not only cohesion, but also a profound geo-ontological solidness, permitted the Germans to be the people at the center of gravity of Europe, which was being held "in the great pincers between Russia on the one side and America on the other."[81]

Heidegger saw the "decline" and "demonism" of the absence of a connection to the earth as the result of uprooting, *Entwurzelung*.[82] Whoever does not have land does not have roots to put down in the earth – he is *wurzellos*. Even before being a historical and political condition, being without roots seemed to be almost a deformity, which, if it was not natural, had become so with time. Nomads had lost the capacity for putting down roots. On this subject, Heidegger was able to refer back to the thinking of the philosophers who had preceded him, from Fichte to Hegel.[83] And it was not by chance that, precisely in his

seminar on Hegel, Heidegger spoke of "Semitic nomads" – a clear reference to the Jewish people.84

But rootlessness had a broader meaning for Heidegger than simply the lack of one's own land. And the Jews were not only nomads, devoid of a land and a state – or, rather, incapable of creating the political structure of a state. Their rootlessness was considered as that unboundness, that *Ungebundenheit* – another word that recurs in the *Black Notebooks* – that was a sign of the time, but which Heidegger imputed to the Jews. The absence of one's own land, also seen as the lack of a background and a foundation, was a peculiarity of a superficial way of existing, without ties – in fact, with a breaking of ties. Above all, a breaking of the tie with Being.85

Heidegger's political accusation took on an onto-historical value. For him it was not just a matter of the contraposition delineated by Hegel between the autochthonous Greeks and the nomadic Jews. As Deleuze and Guattari have observed:

> Heidegger displaces the problem and situates the concept of the difference between Being and beings. [. . .] He views the Greek as the Autochthon rather than as the free citizen. [. . .] The specificity of the Greek is to dwell in Being and to possess its word. Deterritorialized, the Greek is reterritorialized on his own language and its linguistic treasure – the verb *to be*. Thus, the Orient is not before philosophy but alongside, because it thinks but it does not think Being. [. . .] But in Heidegger it is not a question of going farther than the Greeks; it is enough to resume their movement in an initiating, recommencing repetition. This is because Being, by virtue of its structure, continually turns away when it turns toward, and the history of Being or of the earth is the history of its turning away, of its deterritorialization in the technico-worldwide development of Western civilization started by the Greeks and reterritorialized on National Socialism.86

On closer inspection, however, for Heidegger there did not exist a single "Orient." The one that was most distant, the Japanese Orient, could be said to run parallel with the history of the Occident.87 But the internal Orient, the Jewish one, was not

simply marginal – rather, it was an obstacle that impeded the way to the new beginning.

And it was not a matter of a passive obstacle. For Heidegger, the Jews were guilty in some way for what was going on in the world; they were, so to speak, the representatives – in fact, the agents – of modernity. Their atavistic rootlessness responded to the technicalization toward which the world was hurtling, to such a point that they were seen as the prime movers and chief profiteers of this process. The acceleration of the process was favored by the lack of foundation of a people who, on account of their arcane, wandering essence, moved easily upon the surface of the earth, triggering the leveling unification of it.

Although Heidegger justified it in an onto-historical sense, he was not the only one to hurl at the Jews the accusation of an absence of ties with the land and a connivance with modernity. In the famous *Encyclopaedia Judaica* that was being compiled during those years, an entry entitled "Boden" had even been inserted to rebut this accusation, making use of Talmudic sources.[88]

The traditionalist world, in particular the Catholic religion, to which Heidegger belonged, saw in the Jews the symbol of urban modernity, cold and impersonal, the advent of a deracination that would spare no one.[89] The widespread idea was that the Jews felt comfortable in that soulless society and that they derived profit from it. Stripped of his concrete traits, the Jew became an abstract figure that dominated the desert landscape of modernity. Thus, there was affirmed a new kind of anti-Semitism, based on increasingly numerous, immovable, drastic dichotomies.[90]

Werner Sombart played a decisive role in this sense. According to Sombart, the origins of the spirit of capitalism had been erroneously traced by Max Weber in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. The "original sin" of capitalism should, instead, have been attributed to the Jews. This is the thesis that Sombart put forth in *The Jews and Modern Capitalism*, which was first published in 1911. Although it had enjoyed a certain credibility and even prestige, this *Judenbuch* – as it was called, not by chance – was born of a denigratory intention and of a "preconceived and made-up" image of Jews and Judaism.[91] The spirit of capitalism was the *jüdischer Geist*, the "Jewish spirit."

With this thesis, Sombart could achieve different objectives: on the one hand, it reconciled cultural antimodernism with the technical-industrial world, showing the way to a purified and "Aryanized" capitalism connected with the *Volk* and with the national community; on the other hand, it contributed to an essentialistic view of the Jew, who could be blamed for all the malaise, disquiet, and resentment provoked by those sudden, inexplicable changes.

Sombart maintained that the Jews had assailed the economy of the Middle Ages, upset the finalities of Nature, introduced calculation and the production of merchandise beyond that which was useful, and determined the primacy of the economy. The Jewish religion, reduced to a "contract between Jehovah and His chosen people," had provided the theological schema for the capitalistic paradigm.92 Considered to be a rationalization of life, in which feelings and emotions were ignored, while natural instincts were regulated with a steely self-discipline, Judaism appeared to be the true "Puritanism," that asceticism which had promoted capitalism.93 Endowed with infinite mobility, capable of adapting themselves to the most disparate situations, highly intellectual, the Jews opposed "ink and blood, understanding and instinct, abstraction and reality."94 Economic activity had been transformed into an intellectual affair. Wherever the Jewish *Geist* prevailed, "all quality vanishes and only the quantitative aspect matters." The capitalistic world, regulated by abstract coordinates, had found its ultimate reason in money. "Money [-lending] contains the root idea of capitalism."95

According to Sombart, the Jews, an "Oriental" people who had migrated to Europe, had preserved in exile their nomadism and their connection to the desert. Sombart introduced an opposition that was destined to have profound repercussions – the opposition between *Wald* and *Wüste* (forest and desert). The clear moonlit nights, blazing sun, and limitless spaces of the desert had favored abstraction and a conflictual relationship with Nature. In the nomadic life, where everything – one's flock, one's belongings – could suddenly disappear and just as miraculously re-appear, the possibility of acquisition, of unlimited production, the very idea of a value such as money that could be exchanged anywhere, made headway. Thus, for Sombart, the ancestral nexus between Jews and money was revealed.96 The opposite of the desert is the

forest, the *Wald*, deep and obscure, where the peoples of the North dwell – people inclined to the mysterious, oneiric dimension of life, but nonetheless rooted in the earth, concrete. For Sombart, the forest – symbol of Germany – threatened by urbanization, evoked the changing landscape, the progressive desertification of the world; "the modern city is nothing else but a great desert" – it referred metaphorically to the invasive power of the Jews.97

In contrast to the German, the Jew, rootless, deprived of any connection to the earth, was by definition distant from the countryside. Even the smallest ghetto, as poor as it might be, was part of a metropolis. And if, for that matter, Jews happened to live in the big cities, the motive was not difficult to grasp: "Now the modern city is nothing else but a great desert, as far removed from the warm earth as the desert is, and like it forcing its inhabitants to become nomads."98

In this view, the Jews – indifferent to the state, alien to the destiny of the people who were their hosts – behaved like foreigners, and in the end were disinterested spectators. Because of their lack of roots, they had no sense of history; indeed, they did not have a history of their own. They lived projected onto a great humanity, according to the kinds of relationships that they had learned to establish during the diaspora. Therefore, through Marxism, an internationalism devoid of spirit, they had damaged the Socialist idea. Just as the German people, the race of "heroes" as opposed to the Jewish "traders," would have to return out of the desert of the economic age to the authenticity of the *Wald*, so also must Socialism be national.99

8 Against the Jewish Intellectuals

Even before Nazism, in the German *Kriegsideologie*, the reaction to rootlessness, which was seen as spreading abstraction and empty rationality, was inextricably melded with a systematic criticism of the figure of the intellectual. The political intellectual was targeted above all, warned against as a foreign element, the cosmopolitan literary man, propagator of universal values. Heidegger shared this critical stance from the beginning. In a letter written to his wife from Berlin (Charlottenburg) on July 21, 1918, he wrote:

> The people here have lost their soul – their faces don't have any expression at all – at most one of vulgarity, there's no staying this decadence now – perhaps the "spirit" of Berlin can be overcome by a home-grown culture at the provincial universities.[100]

Among Sombart's dichotomies, the one between culture and civilization and the one between intellect and soul had had particular success. Both of these dichotomies relaunched age-old stereotypes, in an updated version. A distant descendant of the *philosophes*, intellectuals who spoke of liberty, humanity, and equality had long been the target of polemics. But to these there was added, toward the end of the nineteenth century, the controversy over intellectualism as opposed to the psychology of the positive and materialistic will.

It can be said that Ferdinand Tönnies was the first to use the term "intellectual," with all of its derogatory meaning, with regard to the *Ethics* of Spinoza, and his "intellectualistic determination of affections."[101] The appearance of Spinoza's name was not by chance: during the Third Reich, it would become the symbol of assimilated Judaism – the most intellectual form of Judaism, and the one most to be feared.[102]

The unstoppable progress of technology and science, the predominance of capitalism, the diffusion of mass culture, the absence of depth, the lack of creativity, imitation, the reproductive instinct, and unlimited production were all phenomena attributed to the intellect. In short: the intellect was the epitome of the "Jewish spirit." If he wasn't a trader, the Jew traded anyway in culture; he made use of culture to achieve his goals, he loaned culture at interest, and he consumed it with his speculations. The Jew was the first one responsible for an intellectualization of life, the adverse effects of which were evident everywhere.

The great rebirth of Jewish culture during the Weimar period, up until the crisis of 1929–30, social criticism, political repercussions, the role of the "intellectuals of the left," and generally the influx of Jews into the press, publishing, the theatre, the cinema – not to mention literature, art, and music – all fueled the anti-Semitic polemic. Everything that was unprecedented, audacious, and modern became identified with the Jews – in short, anything that

threatened tradition appeared to be Jewish.[103] Intolerance for the spreading of the "Jewish spirit" permeated the conservative middle class, public opinion in the provinces, and the academic world – everyone who felt that they were truly "German" ended up agreeing with the positions of the most radical anti-Semites. "Cultured Judeophobia" was a peculiar, difficult-to-explain phenomenon if judged by current criteria.[104]

In his essay "Le crise de l'ésprit," published in 1919, Paul Valéry had drawn attention to that spectral event that loomed over all of Europe.[105] In Germany, it was precisely philosophy that had begun to detect a split between intelligence and spirit, *Intelligenz* and *Geist*. It was a paradox, because the entire idealistic tradition, beginning with Hegel, had sought the "spirituality of the spirit" in intelligence. In the succession of *sensatio, ratio, intellectus*, as early as the Middle Ages intelligence was seen as resembling divine wisdom, and the "intelligences" were pure spirits, the angels who contemplated God at close quarters.

The crisis could be grasped in the splitting off of the intellect, in its separation and isolation, to the point of counteracting the spirit. In the wake of Max Scheler, who wondered about the possibility of restoring the nexus between intelligence and spirit, the question rapidly spread throughout the philosophy of the time.[106] *Intelligere*, intelligence, intellectuality, intellectual, intellectualism: the entire semantic range that revolved around the "intellect" came under accusation. If *intelligere* – Heidegger observed – became "the business of the *intellectus*," then the inevitable outcome would be intellectualism.[107] But the condemnation was almost unanimous, and a chorus of voices – not just the voices of philosophers – was raised against lifeless, rootless, random, abstract intellectuality, against the intellectual seen as being devoid of ties to the community of people, incapable of connecting to his own destiny and of sharing everything that, like destiny, was incalculable. Far from the truth of the soil, and therefore irreparably inauthentic, "dissolving intellectualism," in its empty game, produced, even for Jaspers, "abstraction of the thinking consciousness from being," thus making itself guilty in relation to both the existence of the individual and the community.[108]

But the tone was much more inflammatory in Heidegger, who, unlike Jaspers, plumbed the depths of the polemic, after choosing the path of National Socialism. Carved out of "primitive stone," in the "granite" of the mountains of the Black Forest, like Leo Schlageter – the hero who had fought against the French occupation and died a martyr's death – the philosopher had "firmness of will and clearness of heart."109 From the abysses of *Dasein*, he could rise to the height of Being – with courage, firmness, determination. To his profundity, which was also that of his roots, embedded in the earth, and that of his meditation, was opposed the rootless intellectual, devoid of a history of his own, capable only of a "free-floating speculation [*eine freischwebende Spekulation*] that turns entirely upon itself."110 Karl Mannheim had spoken of a "socially unattached intelligentsia" in his book *Ideologie und Utopie*, which had been published in 1929, the same year Heidegger taught his course on the fundamental concepts of metaphysics.111 It can be presumed that Mannheim – who, moreover, had taken up this concept from Weber – was being targeted by Heidegger, both because he had theorized the figure of the independent intellectual, and because he himself was a Jew who embodied a potentially subversive intellectuality so well.

The polemic became even more bitter, not only in Heidegger's speech upon assuming the position of rector in 1933 – in which, not by chance, *Geist* (spirit) became almost the protagonist of the discourse – but also in his works that came out around 1935 and shortly thereafter.112

But what were the faults of intellectualism in Heidegger's eyes? Why did he believe that intellectualism should be combatted? For Heidegger, intellectualism was an issue of a "misinterpretation" of the "essential connection of thinking to Being," which had been prepared for and perfected by Western metaphysics. It was thinking de-coupled from Being – thinking that could no longer find access to Being and therefore spun around in a vacuum.113 "This thinking does not come overnight."114 It was part and parcel of the dominance of traditional logic; in this sense, it was contiguous with rationalism. But Heidegger saw it as a "contemporary" phenomenon, because it was the result of rootlessness, of loss of every community tie, and of that "being

that belongs to the world history of the earth," which also determines the loss of history, the avoidance of responsibility, indifference, the eruption of massification, the culture of the useful and the usefulness of culture. In short: it was spirit reduced to intellectualism.[115]

Thus, Heidegger spoke about the "disempowerment of the spirit" caused by a vaguely defined "demoniac."[116] For Heidegger, it would have been a mistake to attribute this disempowerment only to Russia and America – as he emphasized in the geopolitical situation that he was describing – since that "disempowering of the spirit" came from Europe itself. Not even German idealism had been able to reach the heights of the *Geist*. Everything had been deprived of profundity, reduced to the flat surface of a mirror that no longer reflected anything. No space was left for reflection. "Spirit" was misunderstood, misrepresented, falsified. "The whole phenomenon of literati and aesthetes is just a late consequence and mutation of the spirit falsified as intelligence. *Mere* ingenuity is the semblance of spirit and veils its absence."[117] This critique did not spare science, which was condemned as specialized technicalization; it was aimed above all at the instrumental use of the spirit, which, although taking place everywhere, sought to enslave intelligence for other, external aims and found its "most extreme form" in Marxism and its way of understanding culture as a "powerless superstructure" with regard to the economy and financial relationships.[118] While cultural values were becoming empty – art for art's sake, poetry for poetry's sake, science for science's sake – spirit was being used for show, as a gimmick, and as a means to achieve personal realization.

Although it was a surface phenomenon – like the mirror that no longer reflects anything – nevertheless for Heidegger intellectualism was not a superficial phenomenon, and anyone who tried to fight it with the same weapons, on the same level, without even knowing it, was making a mistake, running the risk of "inadvertently making common cause with the adversary."[119] Thus, one would not grasp the importance of this "struggle" in which "the spiritual and historical destiny" of Germany "is to be decided." To whom was Heidegger addressing himself? And, in the final end, against whom was his polemic aimed?

The answer to these questions is also the answer to the question

raised by Derrida about *Geist* – that is, about the surprising appearance of the word "spirit" in Heidegger's works of the 1930s. The *Black Notebooks*, where intellectualism is a recurring theme, brought out something that had not been explicitly said but that nevertheless pervaded other writings by Heidegger, and that has not eluded careful readers of the original German texts. If already in his May 1933 speech "The Self-affirmation of the German University" it was evident that Heidegger was addressing himself to National Socialism and to its potential to combat the phenomenon of intellectualism, in the *Black Notebooks* the people whom Heidegger held responsible were indicated in black and white:

> To appropriate "culture" qua means of power and thereby assert oneself and allege a superiority – this is in its ground a *Jewish* comportment. What follows for *cultural politics* as such?120

For Heidegger, intelligence devoid of spirit, bloodless and rootless, was synonymous with the Jewish intelligentsia.121 He targeted entire sectors in the *Black Notebooks*. "Why did Jews and Catholics pursue sociology with special partiality?"122 *Gesellschaft* (society), as opposed to *Gemeinschaft* (community), represented disintegration and the alienated life of the metropolis.123 To the condemnation of Marxism was added that of Freudian psychoanalysis – two realms that were considered to be Jewish. The mark of discrimination was affixed numerous times on Freud by Heidegger. And Heidegger did not hesitate to speak also about "Jewish 'psychoanalysis,'" *jüdische "psychoanalayse"*:124

> One should not be so loud in one's indignation over the psychoanalysis practiced by a Jew, "Freud," if and as long as one cannot *in general* "think" about each and every thing otherwise than by "reducing" it, as an "expression" of "life," to the "instincts" or to the "atrophy of instincts." Such indignant "thinking," which in advance altogether excludes "being," is pure nihilism.125

Heidegger's criticism of psychoanalysis, which purported to be that of someone who was able to tap directly into his own

experiences, loses any credibility when it becomes a pretext for joining the Nazi chorus. Although the names of Marx and Freud had a very different significance for Heidegger, the need to imprint a National Socialist sense upon his battle against the "intelligentsia" led him to take a paroxysmal position that would inevitably be revealed to be a dead end.126

Certainly, Heidegger's reflections on intellectualism had very little in common with the Nazis' intolerance toward culture, which Adorno summed up with the words attributed to the spokesman of Hitler's *Reichskulturkammer*: "When I hear the word 'culture,' I reach for my gun."127 The impasse in which Heidegger found himself is evident: while he was looking for a higher form of thinking, at the same time he was on the side of those who nourished a deeply rooted aversion toward thinking; while he sought profoundness, he was affiliating himself with people who didn't even have an inkling of it. By criticizing intellectualism, he ended up almost endorsing the Nazis' anti-intellectualism.

Heidegger condemned Jewish culture, which according to him reduced spirit to mere intelligence. But while he accused Judaism of being devoid of spirit, tactically taking up the age-old theological stereotype of the Jew who was inextricably attached to reading, he ended up aligning himself with people who were burning books.

9 *Geist* and *ruach*: The "Original Fire" and the Spectral Breath

Not long after it was established, in April 1933 the Nazi German Student Association decided upon a campaign that concluded with the public burning of "deleterious Jewish works"; to these were added the products of Marxism, of pacifism, and those trends, such as "the Freudian school," that gave "excessive emphasis to the instinctive life." On April 13, twelve theses that were intended to be read out during the book burning were posted on all of the walls and message boards of the German universities. The fifth and seventh theses declared: "When a Jew writes in German, he is lying. [. . .] Jewish writings are to be published in Hebrew. If they appear in German, they must be identified as translations."128 The night of May 10, the flames of the bonfires blazed in all of the

universities. In Berlin alone, more than 20,000 volumes were burned; but no fewer were destroyed in other cities.

It is not known whether books were also burned in Freiburg on May 10, 1933; this subject is controversial. Heidegger, who was rector of the university there at that time, denied it decisively: "I forbade the planned book-burning that was scheduled to take place in front of the University building."129 But what seems to have prevented the burning was a heavy rain. Nevertheless, the Italian philosopher Ernesto Grassi, a student of Heidegger, remembered a fire burning in front of the university library.130 According to the local newspaper *Der Alemanne*, the books were burned later, between June 17 and 20, with little fanfare, on the Exerzierplatz, while the event was celebrated during the ceremony of the summer solstice.131

Beyond the ritual of the book burning, there also took place the magical orgy of destruction with which libraries were purged of books produced by the people of the Book – the Jews. As Leo Löwenthal observed, in one of his very few philosophical reflections on this theme, this was "the total liquidation of all intellectuality and all intellectuals."132 The charismatic scream of an immediacy that could not tolerate the word reduced the "Jewish spirit" to ashes.

It was Derrida who raised the question of "spirit" in the work of Heidegger.133 Strictly speaking, *Geist* was not part of Heidegger's philosophical vocabulary – it cannot come close to *Sein, Ereignis, Gelassenheit*, and so on. Although in his habilitation thesis of 1916, *Duns Scotus' Theory of the Categories and of Meaning*, Heidegger had presented his thinking as a "philosophy of the living spirit," subsequently he became increasingly cautious.134 *Geist* is a term that is situated in metaphysics and, indeed, confirms and celebrates it. It is the crowning glory of metaphysics: it enshrines the dichotomy between the sensual and the supersensual and gives precedence to the latter. This is the origin of all of Heidegger's precautions. Already, in *Being and Time* he had been obliged to speak about that which, like *Geist*, it would always be better to avoid: "*How to avoid speaking of it.*"135

Thus, the first problem is posed, whether Heidegger faced it or not, by having recourse to quotation marks, which is the way that the word *Geist* appears "in its deconstructed sense." In this case, "spirit" becomes the "spectral silhouette" of the metaphysical spirit, which always remains in the shadows.[136] This is what occurs in the analytics of being-in-the-world, where, amid mute signs, quotation marks, and italics, Heidegger referred to something that is not the traditional "spirit."[137] In fact, it is not easy to suddenly rid oneself of *Geist*, a protagonist of philosophy. Obviously, the same holds true for its derivatives *geistig* and *Geistigkeit*, but also *geistlich* and *Geistlichkeit*. While the former have a more philosophical and intellectual value, the latter derive from the Greek *pneumatikos* of the Gospels.

Another question arises in the context of the already complex question of "spirit." *Geist* is the translation of the Latin *spiritus* and, even further back in time, of the Greek *pneuma*. Heidegger was well aware of this. Theology flows within the tradition of metaphysics. But what can be made of the clash between languages, when the German *Geist* seems to enjoy an extraordinary authority? Derrida remarked on this evolution of the translation of the word *Geist* toward the end of his essay, where, with a dramatic twist, he introduced the Hebrew word *ruach*.[138] Might the ineffable Hebrew *ruach* in the final end be the specter that inhabits the Germain *Geist*? This could be a summary of the question posed by Derrida, who, on this topic, spoke of "foreclosure."[139]

But, even before this, it is necessary to trace the journey taken by Heidegger who, even as he went back to the Greek term, dismissed the original primacy of the word, as if it were no longer the depository of the last word, but already a derivative; in his search for an "original" term beyond the Greek one, he returned to the German term, upon which he confirmed a "supplement of originarity."[140] If Being could perhaps be said in many ways, *Geist* could only be said in German. At bottom – observes Marlène Zarader – this is the way in which Heidegger proceeded also in other cases when, only apparently, he returned to Greek words while instead aiming at a more originary German *Sage*.[141]

In this circular trajectory, starting from German and ending up at German, "spirit" moves away from the breath of the Greek *pneuma* and is rediscovered as a flame. "What is spirit?" – asked Derrida, returning to the question that Heidegger had posed in 1953 in his famous essay "Language in the Poem" on the poet Georg Trakl.[142] With the poet, Derrida replied: "the hot flame of the spirit."[143] And yet, before Trakl, there had been Hölderlin, with his poem "Bread and Wine," in which the poet had suggested the connection between spirit and fire.[144]

In his "Western Dialogue," a text written between 1946 and 1948 that Derrida did not yet know about and that was only published in 2000, Heidegger stressed the need to think about *das Geistige*, "the spiritual," without reducing it "metaphysically" to the supersensual, "in all the full latitude of its essence."[145] Here, for Heidegger, the spiritual was "igneous," and fire was the "initial unity" that developed by bursting forth. This bursting into flames, in the blaze that was ignited, was "the ire of fire." Once again, Heidegger followed the etymology that suggested to him the connection *Geist–Geysis–gaysa*: "in our ancient language" the devastating fire, in its furious blazing, was called *Geist* (spirit).

But what about the Jewish term, and the multiple meanings of *ruach*: from the wind of God, which in *Bereshit* 8:1 divides and cleaves the waters of creation, to the storm and blowing, to nothingness and vanity, to the breath and thought, to courage and choler? Contrary to what Derrida seemed disposed to believe in the last pages of his essay, it was not the unsaid of oblivion that, surfacing in the pneumatology of the Gospels, remained in an "archi-originary" state, waiting to be remembered and taken up again; rather, it was explicitly the unsaid that had been removed and canceled out.

During the 1930s, Heidegger spoke about *Geist*, in the name of *Geist*, which was a flame and engendered flames. In the *Black Notebooks*, he sang the praises of the "correct original fire," the fire of a truth that was to come, a fire that with its flame would be capable of creating "the new amalgam," of purifying with its combustion.[146] It is the jet of a flame that does not "break loose to pure spirit," because it "binds blood and soil."[147] And he denounced the falsification of a *Geist* that threatens to become

Gespenst, a "'ghost,' i.e., a phantom."[148] Then, when the Germanic *Geist* is proclaimed with words and fire, with an even more disturbing spectrality, beyond the fire, the breath, *ruach*, will be exhaled and the "Jewish spirit" will reappear, negated and burned at the stake, in the ashes of the books and the specters that already loom around that scene.

10 Machination and Power

One of the key words in the *Black Notebooks*, which also appears frequently in Heidegger's other writings from the same time, is *Machenschaft*, which is usually translated as "machination." According to the Brothers Grimm's etymological dictionary (the *Deutsches Wörterbuch*), in Southern Germany the word meant *Gemachte* – something that is produced. Heidegger maintained this connection. It can be said that in his works from this time, *Machenschaft* indicates manipulative domination, the new categorical imperative that frenetically ran through the world of technology, where there was no longer anything that could not produce or be produced.

The leaden landscape of this planetary hustle and bustle was, as in Charlie Chaplin's film *Modern Times*, an assembly line that had for some time gone beyond the gates of the factories to ensnare and meld to its own mechanism the streets as well, and above all the cities, those "gigantic factories" that, in their ceaseless, teeming activity, and in the incessant changing of their architectural tangle, "do not possess any form."[149] *Machenschaft*, for Heidegger, recalled the *totale Mobilmachung*, the "total mobilization" of Ernst Jünger – that pervasive, implacable discipline that even reaches the infant in its crib, that physics of traffic and that metaphysics of work, in which each person, albeit with dismay, must recognize his or her own destiny as an *Arbeiter*, a laborer, an operator of machinery, an employee of mechanization, who applies the mysterious law to which everything is inexorably consigned in the age of the masses and of machines.[150]

If there was no trace of a revolt, it was because, unlike those who, like Weber, had spoken of "disenchantment," Heidegger perceived

a refined enchantment in the power of mechanization, where, thanks to unlimited progress, nothing now appeared to be impossible. In fact, everything was revealed to be feasible, and feasibility, *Machbarkeit* – which distinguishes metaphysics, also indicating its perfect achievement – was the way in which entities were made available. In Greek terms, mechanization was the passage from *physis* – Nature in the broad sense – to *techne*, via poetic fabrication, *poiesis*. Every entity, even if it was natural, appeared to be fabricated. If, in early Greek times, machination, which was always seen as being against Nature, did not reach a point of power, it did so in the "Judeo-Christian thought of creation."151 The biblical idea of a God as a creator changes the way of seeing a being, which always appears to be an *ens creatum*. This would have thrown all of metaphysics off track, given that, the connection between cause and effect being implicit in creation, the being is always also caused. This accusation has a theological weight that should not be overlooked: in order to connect machination to the Jewish context, Heidegger attributed to biblical thinking his own Christian – and in fact scholastic – idea of creation, understood as a causal emanation, as well as his own idea of God as the Creator Being among beings; these were ideas that do not correspond to anything in the Torah, where creation is seen as a dialogic letting-be.

For Heidegger, the more that machination went on unfurling its own power, the more it concealed itself, leading to the extreme abandonment of Being during the age of technology, whereby beings, consigned to the blind grasp of doing-everything, subjected to unstoppable monetization, were reduced to the status of a replaceable part, a reserve, and, their possibilities dissolving, wore out, and were used up. It is not difficult to imagine that machination was not limited to making, to *machen* in the sense of fabricating or producing something, but would also express itself in *ausmachen*, a tireless bringing to completion that is also a form of extinguishing. Thus, machination, while it seems to give life to beings, in reality constitutes the greatest danger for them, because, in making use of them, it exposes them to becoming nothing, to being used up. The force of machination is a power, *Macht*, that dominates by virtue of an ontological violence, a constitutive *Gewalt* of the disposition of feasibility. There is no machination

without violence.[152] And, given that *physis* has been violated over the centuries, metaphysics can be read as a history of violence in which machination is the ultimate outcome. How not to see, for that matter, the will to power that is manifested in that ironclad technical-media disposition in which even time is reduced to the repetition of what is always the same?

In Heidegger's thought, there thus developed a political conflict between the dominance of machination, the *Macht der Machenshaft*, and the sovereignty of Being, the *Herrschaft des Seyns.* This conflict, alluded to by Heidegger in other works, became a recurring theme in the *Black Notebooks*, where, especially in the *Ponderings* from 1939–41, it took on increasingly extreme tones.

Although Heidegger maintained that "machination" indicated a way in which beings were presented, making use of feasibility, he nevertheless emphasized that, in its usual meaning, the term indicates a "furtive activity," a "plotting," referring to intrigue and conspiracy. This meaning, which refers to a despicable way for humans to behave, should be avoided, even if machination favors beings' "evil essence," their *Unwesen*.[153]

And yet in the *Black Notebooks* it seems that Heidegger himself did not avoid this meaning. He went so far as to speak of the "age of machination" to indicate the "definitive victory" of metaphysics, which, on account of the complicity that links them, would also signal the victory of Judaism:[154]

> The "victor" in this "struggle," which contests goallessness pure and simple and which can therefore only be the caricature of a "struggle," is perhaps the greater groundlessness that, not being bound to anything, avails itself of everything (Judaism). Nevertheless, the genuine victory, the one of history over what is a-historical, is achieved only where what is groundless excludes itself because it does not venture beyng but always only reckons with beings and posits their calculations as what is real.[155]

For Heidegger, the power of machination was another way of saying the dominance of beings: both, impeding access to Being, undermined the possibility of decision; both could be imputed to

Judaism. *Machenschaft* is the word that in the *Black Notebooks* introduces, accompanies, punctuates almost every passage in which *Judentum* is spoken of. The connection between machination and Judaism is evident not only through metaphysics. The violent, metaphysical power of machination is the Jewish power that, devoid of roots and of land, devoid of depth and history, spreads over the surface of the globe, ensnares it by plotting and intriguing, weaving relationships that are based solely on self-interest. This power favors the immeasurable and massification, fosters the mixing of races, traffics, sells, negotiates, wheels and deals, and, in the limitless feasibility of the modern era, consumes, exploits beings, reduces everything to a calculation, enslaves, makes reality into a "specter," voiding it and depriving it of meaning; it turns the spirit into a phantasm, it disempowers Being.156 For Heidegger, machination was the embodiment of Judaism.

It was not by chance that, during the years leading up to the "planetary war," the conflict between *Machenschaft* and *Herrschaft* became more intense – the conflict between the dominance of beings and the reign of Being, between calculating super-power and the consumption of the spirit, between the enslaving power of the "slaves," which exercised violence, and royal sovereignty, which stemmed from the fundamental initial decision.157

> The power of machination – the eradication even of Godlessness, the anthropomorphizing of the human being into the animal, the exploitation of the earth, the calculation of the world – has passed over into a state of definitiveness; distinctions of peoples, nations, and cultures are now mere façades. No measures could be taken to impede or check machination.158

For Heidegger, the abandonment of Being extended to the entire planet, and *Machenschaft* became a synonym for unlimited world power: "But that is precisely *globalism*: the last step of the machinational essence of the power to annihilate what is indestructible on the path of devastation."159

11 The Desertification of the Earth

It is a wanderer, the shadow of Zarathustra, who sings “an old afterdinner song,” composed “amongst daughters of the desert” when he is far away from old Europe: “Die Wüste wächst: weh Dem, der Wüste birgt!” – “The deserts grow: woe him who doth them hide!”160

The warning leaves open an ambiguity because of the verb *bergen*, which can mean to find, to give refuge, to hide oneself, or to hide something. For Nietzsche, the growth of the desert was not a merely geographic phenomenon. The devastation of terrain was not only the desertification of the earth.

For Heidegger too, *Verwüstung* went well beyond the threat to the environment, to natural resources, to the sustainability of development: “*Ver-wüstung* here does not merely mean the laying waste [*Wüstmachen*] of something present at hand.”161 Thus, one should not think of the desert that spreads, drying out and devastating everything. Desertification, which “bursts forth” from machination, constituting its perverse, inevitable effect, is the “installation of the desert” that enables the emptiness of the desert to expand. Thus, it is not correct to translate this term as “drying up” or “devastation,” not only because the reference to the “desert” is lost, but also because it reduces the phenomenon that, if it has a political weight, nevertheless had for Heidegger ontological relevance and was inscribed within the history of Being.

This is why desertification appears so often in the *Black Notebooks*, particularly in *Ponderings XII–XV*, where the “planetary war” that occupies the last pages is already looming in the first pages, in the clash between *Zerstörung* and *Verwüstung*, between destruction and desertification. While destruction is “the precursor of a concealed beginning,” desertification or devastation is “the aftereffect of an already decided end.”162 The abyss between the two could not be any wider. For Heidegger, destruction had not only a destructive role, but also a creative significance; if it was destructive, even in the setting of war, it was to open up a passageway and prepare for a new beginning. On the contrary, desertification relates to the end, which it merely repeats, and is an “essential” transfer to the void that touched Being even before it touched beings.

For Heidegger, the desertification of the world was the desertion of

Being. Thus, *Verwüstung* was – disturbingly – comparable to *Vernichtung*: "Complete annihilation is *devastation* [*Verwüstung*],"163 because in that desert nothing ever "grows." Beings lose their connection to Being – they are separated from it, they no longer come to the decision of Being. Desertification therefore means "the undermining of the possibility of an inceptive decision."164 Hence, we have the onto-historical scope of desertification, which blocks the way to the realms of decision and does not permit the occurrence of a new beginning.

At times Heidegger resorted to the more poetic word *Verödung* as a synonym of *Verwüstung*; certainly, in both cases, the derogatory prefix evokes the word *Verjudung*. But beyond this affinity, what is important is the echo and the evocation of the word *Wüste*, desert. It is not difficult to perceive in desertification the ultimate symbol of Judaism. And not only because the desert is a symbol of the Hebrew people, but also because desertification is the impossibility of having a relationship with the beginning – it is that rootlessness that risks becoming global, with "the power to annihilate what is indestructible," to erode and undermine what could give rise to the light of the new beginning.165

But between *Wüste* and *midbàr*, between the desert in the German imagery of Heidegger and the desert that is the background for the narrative of the Torah, there is an abyss of meaning. An arid place, desolate, bleak, rocky, uninhabitable, devoid of life, empty and null, a formless and limitless space devoid of boundaries, and thus a place of perdition, temptation, the seat of evil and devilry: this was the desert for Heidegger.

In contrast, for the Jews *midbàr* was the way to freedom that opened up after the Exodus from Egypt, *Mizraim* – the narrow straits of their enslavement and oppression. In the desert they began to breathe again, to articulate their breath, to speak about being free. Etymologically, *midbàr* contains the root *d-v-r, davàr*, which means "word" – a word that can be said, but even before that a word that can be heard. In the desert, the Israelites waited, listening, and received the Torah, not to make it their exclusive possession, but to bring it to the world. It was to this that the Jews were called, this was why they were the chosen people. For that matter, already with the Exodus the Jews had borne

witness to the fact that they could return to being free, even while they were slaves. The desert was the road to return – but the path was not marked. And so it was the law of Moses that gave the Israelites orientation. And thanks to the apparent void of the desert, they learned to look upward. It was in the desert – the place of Absence – that the Israelites constituted themselves as a people through a theological-political pact, a "theocracy" that was "built upon the anarchical elements in Israel's soul."[166] The desert, where territorially there is no beginning, effectively depicts this political idea that, accepting only the guidance of God, contests the *arche*, the beginning and the command.[167]

This is precisely where the difficulty was for Heidegger: he believed that Judaism excludes the beginning, and thus that it profoundly undermines sovereignty, because "all mastery is inceptual and belongs to the beginning."[168] And on the other hand: "*arche* means both beginning and domination . . . starting and disposition."[169] Mastery or sovereignty, *Herrschaft*, resides in the royal capacity of "giving a beginning." The *Herr* (lord) is he whose power comes from the advent of Being. In the eyes of this power, the evil essence of Judaism is a devastating essence: "The ordering force of devastation is wrath."[170] Thus, desertification or devastation could also be expressed as anarchization.

Refractory to everything that negates it, desertification, in its *Unwesen*, in its evil or dissonant excess – according to Heidegger – "cannot, indeed, be eliminated directly, but only be set into its essential end through its very essence."[171]

Heidegger's attitude did not change after the war. "Evening Conversation: In a Prisoner of War Camp in Russia, between a Younger and an Older Man" is dated May 8, 1945. The theme is desertification and waiting. The mysterious, benevolent vastness of the forest (albeit the forest is in Russia in this case) is contrasted to desertification, which, if not stopped, appears as an "evil," an evil without roots, uprooted, that has spread everywhere; an evil that was already there before, of which the world war has been an outcome; an evil that should be understood not as that which is morally "bad" or "reprehensible," but rather as that which is malicious: "Malice is insurgency, which rests in furiousness,

indeed such that this furiousness [*Grimmige*] in a certain sense conceals its rage [*Ingrimm*]"; "The essence of evil is the rage of insurgency."172

12 The Apocalyptic and the "Prince of This World"

Since the 1920s, the ideal of a national community in Germany, the principle of a leader, and the condemnation of democracy had aroused bitter debates. But anti-Semitism, even where political divergencies existed, was a unifying motif of the National Socialist vision. What was spreading was not so much the so-called *Radauantisemitismus* – the anti-Semitism of the street which, besides playing on people's basest instincts, was connected to the idea of "race"; rather, it was the "anti-Semitism of reason" propounded by Hitler.173 Even the members of the educated middle classes and the academic elite welcomed the discriminatory measures against Jews that were being enacted one after the other. Even conservative individuals who did not identify with the more inflammatory tones of the Nazi party were hoping for an exclusion of the Jews, not only from the public sphere, but also from the *Volk*, from the German people.174 German Jews could no longer be considered *Volksgenosse*, fellow citizens; rather, they were *Gäste*, guests, and that was the only way that they could be tolerated. This also held for Jews who had been assimilated for quite some time, and even for those who had been baptized as Christians. The water of baptism could no longer wash away the shame of Jewish blood.

The novelty of Nazi anti-Semitism, which had inherited the preoccupation with miscegenation and the aspiration for a pure German identity from *völkisch* nationalism, with its ethnic-racist basis, and from colonial xenophobia, should not overshadow the fact of its continuity with traditional Christian anti-Judaism, which was the source of the vocabulary and the imagery that continued to feed the stigmatization of the Jews. In the course of the nineteenth century, the theological contrast between Christianity and Judaism had found legitimacy in the biologicalization of the anti-Semitic metaphor. Nevertheless, it would be reductive to judge the anti-Semitism of the Nazis as merely "biological." Under the guise of science, or pseudo-science, there also emerged theological

prejudices aimed at motivating and consolidating the contrast between "Aryans" and "Semites." Without this continuity, it would be impossible to understand the political theology of National Socialism, which made of Hitler the "divine instrument" in the planetary war against the Jews.

Rigorous, biological racism is not sufficient to answer the question: Why the Jews? The anti-Semitism of Hitler was a political and theological union of racism and apocalypticism: on the one hand was the cold, scientific approach of a physician who eliminates infection, the breeder who separates livestock; and on the other was the apocalyptic vision of the prophet, driven by existential hatred, by metaphysical passion, within the scenario of a final battle between good and evil – an anguished, extreme clash between salvation and nothingness. The victory of the Jews would, in fact, have meant not only the end of the Aryan race, but also the annihilation of the cosmos.

This found confirmation in the image of the Jew as a microbe, a bacillus, an eternal fungus, a spider, a leech, a parasite, a vampire, according to the inventory of biologism.175 But at the same time, the Jew was seen as pure evil, a demoniacal being, Satan. For Dietrich Eckart, a mentor of Hitler and one of the founders of the German Workers' party, which later became the Nazi party, the Jew, "devoid of a soul," negator of immortality, was the new version of Mephistopheles, whose secret aim was to "de-spirit" the world, turning it into nothing. But there was more: in a perspective that explicitly evokes the apocalypse of Saint John, Eckart called the Jew the *Fürst dieser Welt*, the "prince of this world," "the anti-Christ."176 A similar apocalyptic Satanology, which for that matter pervades the texts of the Nazi doctrinaires, was also present in the works of Joseph Goebbels, for whom the Jew was "the Antichrist of universal history," and therefore "Christ cannot have been a Jew."177 The *Drittes Reich*, the "Third Reich," would in that sense be the realm of salvation.

To place in focus the totalitarian afflatus of Nazism, it is necessary to consider both perspectives: "Hitlerian anti-Semitism implacably scours the entire universe, from the microbe to the cosmos."178 Whether the Jew was depicted as a microbe or as a demon, whether he was relegated to the subhuman sphere or elevated to the superhuman sphere, the result was de-humanization.

13 The Deracification of Peoples

The complexity of this political theology is the indispensable context for evaluating Heidegger's position. If it were legitimate to reduce the anti-Semitism of the Nazis to a mere biologism, it would become easy, as many have attempted to do, to say that Heidegger's position fell outside the National Socialist ideology. On the other hand, it is not possible to view his position as merely an innocuous anti-Judaism. His hostility toward the Jews, besides being theological, was also political.

Seen from this perspective, the *Black Notebooks* undoubtedly have a clarifying function. In fact, there are numerous pages in which there emerges an anti-Semitism that is in no way distant, when seen in the totality of its motives, from the racist-apocalyptic anti-Semitism of the years following the announcement of the Nuremberg Laws. There is a particularly incisive passage that probably dates from 1939, the period after the *Kristallnacht*, where what Heidegger said can be considered a further step in his reflections on *Machenschaft*.

If the notion of "race" had risen to the status of a principle of history, it was not because of a few "doctrinaires" who had arbitrarily invented it, but rather because of that "power of machination" that subjects beings to a leveling calculation.[179] Heidegger pointed an accusatory finger at the notion that life could be manipulable; we can detect here a relatively explicit criticism of the biopolitical program of the Nazis.[180] He intuited that, well beyond the racism of the nineteenth century, the novelty of the Nazis' biopolitical program resided in the manipulation dictated by the will to power and, in fact, by the excessive power of life. But the reference to machination makes one suspicious. And, in fact, Heidegger imputed the principle of race to the Jews, who according to him had furtively inserted it into history and who, therefore, were the first racists.

> *With their emphatically calculative giftedness*, the Jews have for the longest time been "living" in accord with the principle of race, which is why they are also offering the most vehement resistance to its unrestricted application. The instituting of racial breeding stems not from "life" itself, but from the overpowering of life by machination. What

> machination pursues with such planning is a *complete deracializing* of peoples through their being clamped into an equally built and equally tailored instituting of all beings. One with the deracializing is a self-alienation of the peoples – the loss of history, i.e., the loss of the domains of decision regarding beyng.181

This kind of argumentation resembles the defensive process with which Nazi propaganda blamed the Jews for the persecutions of which they were the victims. Besides being surprising, this accusation is captious: on the one hand, the Jews were being accused of living according to the principle of race, and on the other hand they were being held responsible for the deracification of peoples. How could that be possible? Especially since *Entrassung* means deprivation of race, egalitarian bondage?

Beyond this, according to Heidegger the Jews were against an "unlimited" application of that principle – the reference is to the Nuremberg Laws – not because they felt discriminated against, but because they did not want to extend their privilege to others, which would legitimize what the Germans were claiming.

Deracification was one of the most serious accusations that Heidegger made against the Jews, and, given that it had already been ascribed to a devious intention, it was a prelude to the accusation that they were plotting to take over Europe. To follow this otherwise elusive logic, and above all to grasp its weight, it is necessary to evoke two names: Nietzsche and Hitler.

In a chapter of *Thus Spoke Zarathrustra* entitled "Von Priestern," which should be translated as "On Priests," Nietzsche wrote: "their folly taught that with blood one proved truth. But blood is the worst witness of truth."182 Without too much reticence, Nietzsche recalled those who "did not know how to love their God except by crucifying man!"183 For Nietzsche, the Jewish people, defined by deicide – the spilling of blood of the crucifixion – were the people of priests, whose "folly" – *Thorheit*, a word that, with a German pronunciation, recalls the Torah – had taught that the law of blood, purportedly the witness of truth, should be followed. In short, the Jewish people submitted to the line traced by blood, to lineage, to race.

Heidegger commented on Nietzsche's words several times in the course that he taught during the winter semester of 1938/9 – exactly the period from which the passage from the *Black Notebooks* dates.184 According to a famous suggestion by Nietzsche, "truth is a sort of error": it leads to mistakes; blood, a "definitive" thing, the "suspension of life," the "elimination of new possibilities," must therefore be the worst witness to truth. And the text goes on to speak of "German unity" and the Germans who, in the present, have "lost their form."185

Hitler was much more explicit in *Mein Kampf*, when, in referring to the Talmud, he decried, "The Jewish religious doctrine is primarily a direction for preserving the purity of the blood of Judaism as well as for the regulation of the Jews' intercourse with one another."186 Even while blending in with his host population, the Jew "exercises the strictest seclusion of his race [. . .] he always keeps his male line pure in principle." He infiltrates the host population in order to bastardize it, knowing that "the bastards take to the Jewish side."187 But "a racially pure people, conscious of its blood, can never be enslaved by the Jew."188 Hitler believed that intermingling and heterogeneity were the political strategy that the Jews were pursuing, with the aim of bringing about democracy, equality, and parliamentarism, and of thus attaining *Weltherrschaft*, world domination. But in order to attain this domination, they did not fight openly; in fact, they avoided the friend–enemy distinction, dissimulating by means of deception and subterfuge. They concealed their own homogeneity and at the same time fostered their adversary's heterogeneity: this would be the Jews' path to world domination.

Also under accusation was the Jews' position as the chosen people of God, the separation of a "holy" people, *kadosh* – which in Hebrew implies "separated" – as is said in the Book of Leviticus: "Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy."189 This holiness was practiced through the rules that sanctify life, from the ablution of the hands to the ban on eating blood, simply as a sign of recognition of the sovereignty of God over Creation, because blood is a symbol of vitality; for that matter, according to Leviticus 17, the ban on consuming blood also held for foreigners residing among the Israelites.190 These and other precepts, which are further obligations, and were seen as making Israel "a nation of

priests," along with their belonging to a tradition that is passed down through the generations – *toldòt* – and has nothing biological about it, was surreptitiously taken for racism.

The deracification of peoples is also akin to what Schmitt called the *Dämon der Entartung*, "the demon of degeneracy."191 *Art* is a synonym of *Rasse*, which can also mean "manner," "format," "type," "form" – to take up a term used by Nietzsche – not only in a biological sense, but also in a political sense. This is possible because the Jews were considered to be an *Unrasse*, a "non-race," or, as Rosenberg said, a *Gegenrasse*, an "anti-race."192 For Heidegger, the power of machination was exerted through calculation, which manipulated life and subjected it to the yoke of equality, taking away the difference between peoples, the particular imprint of each people, via the deracification that was advancing side by side with the "self-alienation of the peoples," the "loss of history," the distancing from those areas in which it was possible to make the decision regarding Being.193

Through this forced egalitarianism, which extended from the biological sphere to the political one, populations that had an "originary historical power" were prevented from achieving unity. Heidegger was referring not only to the Germans, but also to the Russians, thus introducing the distinction between *Russentum* and Bolshevism. The Bolshevist movement, which Heidegger saw as a political expression of Judaism, was nothing more than the "anticipation of the unrestricted power of machination." Thus, it would have been senseless to leverage the principle of race in order to contrast it, given that Bolshevism was rooted in the same metaphysics from which racism derived, and into which National Socialism was at risk of falling.194

14 Race or Rank?

So should we think that for Heidegger racism was metaphysical? And that this was the reason why he distanced himself from the principle of "race?"

Far from being absent, the word *Rasse* began to appear in Heidegger's work around 1933, becoming more frequent during the second half of the 1930s.195 This should not be surprising.

The same thing happened in general in the works of Heidegger's contemporaries, from Jünger to Schmitt, where silence was followed by authors taking a stance about what was a key word in the language of the Third Reich.

The attitude that Heidegger assumed toward the theme of race is reflected in, and clarifies, his attitude toward National Socialism. His critical reflections on the biological reduction of the concept, his questioning of the etymology of the term, and his reference to a broader meaning should not lead us to believe that Heidegger rejected the concept or expunged the word. Keeping silent about the racism of metaphysics does not in any way mean excluding the idea of a hierarchical division of humanity wherein some peoples, and not others, have a place in the history of the world.[196]

The word "race" almost always appears in quotation marks in the pages of Heidegger's works. These are the kind of quotation marks whose ambivalent use was pointed out by Derrida in the similar case of the word *Geist*, "spirit." The use of quotation marks is a way of using a word without really using it or making it acceptable. "The catharsis of the quotation marks frees it [i.e., the word 'spirit'] from its vulgar, *uneigentlich* marks."[197] If the word appears without the surveillance of quotation marks, it should be considered with suspicion.

Certainly, it is not difficult to imagine that Heidegger was quite distant from the racism of a biological nature, not only – and not so much – on account of scientific claims or the primacy attributed to corporeity. Rather, the motive was that biologism was only one of the results of metaphysics: "All racial thinking is modern and moves on the path of the conception of the human being as subjectum."[198] Heidegger reiterated several times that race and subjectivity were closely connected. And he referred to Jünger in regard to this connection: "'Race' is a power-concept – presupposes *subjectivity*; cf. On Ernst Jünger."[199] But in what sense did the notion of race derive from the conception of the subject, and above all from power, or rather the will to power?

One must presume that it was not only Nietzsche, "whose thinking on race does not have a biologistic sense, but rather a metaphysical one," who paved the way for Heidegger.[200] *Aufzucht* is a term that had been used by Nietzsche and later became part of the Nazi

jargon; Heidegger did not scruple to use the word, even in a derogatory sense – it means "rearing" or "breeding," but also has the more restricted meaning of *Zucht*, "discipline." The etymology of the word *Rasse*, as obscure as it might be, derives from the old French *haraz*, which in turn derives from the Scandinavian term for the "breeding of horses." Homogeneity does not come about through heredity – rather, it is sought out, willed, through calculation.

Only a modern subject that purports to be sovereign can arrive, in that manipulative process of self-affirmation, at the point of thinking of race with the idea of breeding human beings in order to make of them a homogeneous group. In this sense, "curating" a race is seen as an extreme, paroxysmal measure that is urged by modernity.

But this is where Heidegger's criticism runs out. Even as he condemned biologism, Darwinism, and the metaphysics that underlay them – the will to power – he did not truly call into question "race" *per se*; he did not say that it was an invention, much less did he warn that human beings are not animals and cannot be distinguished as different species. In fact, in spite of everything, the distinction between races seems to have been preserved in Heidegger's way of thinking. This is the origin of Heidegger's passing from race to rank in order to justify a distinction that would not be reduced to mere carnality. The distinction of "rank," indicated by the adjective *rassig*, as opposed to *rassisch*, was not intentional – that is, it was not a biological manipulation – rather, it occurred, it happened, like an event.

> "Race" [*"Rasse"*] means not only that which is racial as the bloodline in the sense of heredity, of hereditary blood connection and of the drive to live, but means at the same time, often that which is racy [*das Rassige*]. This is not, however, confined to corporeal qualities, but we say, for example, also "snazzy [*rassige*] car" (at least the young boys). That which is racy embodies a certain rank, provides certain laws, does not concern in the first place the corporeality of a family and of the lineage. Racial in the first sense does not by a long shot need to be snazzy, it can rather be very drab.[201]

Race and rank are not identical. What has to do with race does not necessarily have to do with rank. But in giving more weight to "rank," *Rang*, Heidegger was not contesting "primacy," *Vorrang* – the idea that the notion of race carries with it, without clarifying it.[202] If we look at the etymology of the word *Rang*, which derives from the old French *renc* or *rang*, it means "circle," "gathering"; it indicates disposition within a circle. It cannot be said that this figure of speech, which evokes a grim assembly of medieval knights, does not involve alignment, order, albeit in relation to rank and status; that is does not, therefore, envision a selection. For that matter, the fact that the adjective *rassig* was used in this sense is documented by Klemperer:

> she [the hunchback Frieda, who had trained Klemperer in the factory] identified Germanness with the magical concept of the Aryan; it was barely conceivable to her that a German woman could be married to me, to a foreigner, a creature from another branch of the animal kingdom; all too often she had heard and repeated the terms "*artfremd* [alien]" and "*deutschblütig* [of German blood]" and "*niederrassig* [of inferior race]" and "nordisch [Nordic]" and "*Rassenschande* [racial defilement]"; she certainly didn't have a clear picture of what this all meant . . .[203]

In *Introduction to Metaphysics*, in fact, Heidegger stigmatized egalitarianism, the "predominance of the indifferent," the *Gleichgültiges*, "the onslaught of that which aggressively destroys all rank and all that which is world-spiritual, and portrays these as a lie. This is the onslaught of what we call demonic (in the sense of the destructively evil)."[204] In the *Black Notebooks*, where he again took up this theme, Heidegger wrote: "Distressed souls speak here of the 'Antichrist'; if he came he would remain a harmless lad, over and against what is 'happening' and has already found its henchmen."[205] Heidegger's denouncement of egalitarian mediocrity is accompanied in the *Black Notebooks* by his condemnation of "commixture," *Vermischung*.[206] His critical distance from the biological idea of "race" did not prevent him from remaining faithful to the notion of rank; he continued to adhere to the primacy of a *Denkart*, a way of thinking, and of an *Art*, a species, that of a "nobility of *Dasein*."[207] Just as people

could not be reduced to their corporeality, to ties of flesh and blood, so existence, *Dasein*, could not be limited to "thrownness," *Geworfenheit*. Heidegger referred back explicitly to *Being and Time* in order to clarify that "race" is a "condition (thrownness) of historical Dasein," which cannot, however, be elevated to "unconditioned."208 Otherwise, it would be forgotten that Dasein, even if it is thrown into its historical facticity, is nevertheless always free; it is a thrown projection, an *Entwurf*.

If blood could not be a sufficient condition, much less become unconditioned, it was nevertheless a "condition." Thus, Heidegger, in the winter of 1933–4, could say: "blood and earth are powerful and necessary, but they are not sufficient conditions for the existence of a people."209 And, a few months later, he added:

> Thus, blood and bloodline can also essentially determine the human being only when it is determined by moods, never from itself alone. The call of the blood [*Stimme des Blutes*] comes from the fundamental mood [*Grundstimmung*] of the human being.210

The "dismal biologism" for which Heidegger reproached "*vulgar National Socialism*," the biologism of the journalists and "makers of culture" who were laboring under the "brainless appeal of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*," was for him a sort of "*ethical materialism*."211 For Heidegger, herein lay the limitation of the doctrinaires of the Third Reich and their *Übermensch*, their "superman" – they responded to Judaism on the level of what he deemed to be "ethical materialism," and therefore they were on the wrong path.212 For that matter, Heidegger shared more than one of their myths, shifting the discussion onto the ontological level – which did not mean lessening the gravity of the "question," but, on the contrary, deepening and intensifying it.

15 The Metaphysics of Blood

Who is a Jew? How is the Jew defined? Does the Jew's "essence" run the risk of going beyond any definition? Drawing even a conceptual circle around this notion, one does not succeed in tracing precise boundaries.

This was the problem that the Nazi state entrusted to the bureaucracy – that obscure official power which not by chance would be directly responsible for the extermination of the Jews. The hurdle of defining what a Jew is had already been encountered by the propagandists of the late nineteenth century, from Marr to Dühring and Frisch, who, in spite of everything, never arrived at the point of identifying "the Jew," the object of their obsession, even while they were launching warnings and anathemas against the danger represented by "Jewish blood." The evil – they said – was in the race.[213] But how to define race? Was it not perhaps "arcane" – as Schmitt was to admit several years later in his *Glossarium*?[214]

The problem, complicated by the existence of the *Mischling*, the mixed-blood individual, the half-Jew who not only bastardized "Aryan blood" and made it impure but also impeded the erection of barriers capable of protecting the "German body," became urgent when the anti-Jewish measures and provisions for the exclusion of Jews began to be implemented. Documents from this time speak of a disharmony among the Nazi legislators about the notions of race and allogeneity. And while the essentialistic conception – according to which one drop of Jewish blood was sufficient to make a German into a bastard – supported by the radical anti-Semites of the Nazi party was making headway, the boundaries were being constantly expanded to also include half-Jews. But, in spite of all the rhetoric, the Nazi legislation did not arrive at a biological-racial definition of "Jew." The Nuremberg Laws "for the protection of German blood" remained incomplete, which created an awkward situation for scientists who were studying race and eugenics, from Eugen Fischer to Ottmar von Verschuer who, while opportunistically praising the legislation, were aware that it did not provide any tools for classifying Jewish citizens, given that a "Jewish race" did not exist.

This was the paradox: on the one hand it was being said that only those with German blood, regardless of their religious affiliation, could belong to the German people, and be citizens. On the other hand, it was said that "non-Aryans" were people descended from Jews, and by "Jews" was meant those who belonged to the Jewish religion.[215] Contrary to what many believe, the Nuremberg Laws were not based upon "scientific" criteria, and, solely for

propaganda reasons, they were called "racial laws," given that racist fantasies about the Jews never had any empirical confirmation and therefore were obliged to have recourse to theology.

For that matter, in what way should Jewish blood be different from German blood? And above all: why should blood be used to establish identity? The question is a philosophical one.

People can change their way of dressing or acting, they can acquire a different culture, learn another language, they can even change their religious faith – but blood remains. It is the essence in which identity is concealed. In their obsession with defining what a Jew is – as if there were an immutable Jewish essence – the Nazis attempted to find an answer in blood – an element, internal and interior, that cannot be externally dissimulated or counterfeited.

Water – even the water of the baptismal font – cannot wash away blood. Seen by the Nazis as masters of camouflage, skillful liars pretending to be something that they were not, masterful at fitting in, covering and concealing their own identity, the Jews could not escape their own blood and the proof of that blood.

After a period of forced baptisms, Spain had closed the gates to universal brotherhood with the *Sentencia-Estatuto* decreed in Toledo in 1449; this document introduced the notion of *limpieza de sangre* to distinguish *cristianos viejos*, "Christians of pure Christian origin," from *cristianos nuevos*, Jews who had been baptized but who remained, because of their blood, immutably Jewish. But wasn't the reproach against the Jews that they had not recognized Jesus as the Messiah? Thus, if by being baptized they recognized him, becoming "believers in Christ," wasn't it theologically aberrant to discriminate against them on the basis of blood? Wasn't this contrary to the teachings of that rabbi from Nazareth, who in turn came from the people of Israel? And yet Spain, after having for centuries promoted the assimilation of the Jews – by persuasion and, more often, by violence – on the threshold of the modern age turned against the *conversos* its own resentment, its frustration for an identity that it did not have. It was believed that, although they palmed themselves off as Christians, the *marranos* had continued to practice Judaism in secret; they

lied, they were turncoats, and above all they had retained their Jewish traits unchanged: cunning, greed, vengefulness. Their evil essence was preserved in their blood, which no conversion could remedy. And their blood represented the impassable barrier to rein in their ambition, to impede their intrusion. Purity of blood, without Jewish contamination, became much more important than purity of faith. And the criterion for being a true Spaniard was *limpieza de sangre de tiempo inmemorial*, purity of blood from time immemorial.

It is not difficult to recognize the "phenomenological affinities" between medieval Spain and nineteenth- and twentieth-century Germany that were pointed out by Yerushalmi – affinities separated by centuries that should nevertheless be read against the background of a historical continuum.216 In Spain and in Germany, there were analogous processes of assimilation, and analogous reactions from an anti-Semitism that showed its contiguity with anti-Judaism. This decisive historical connection came about in both cases through a political theology aimed at defeating an internal enemy. The political use of theology during the Spanish Inquisition is a telling example.

It is from this point of view that we should examine, in all of its disturbing complexity, the up-to-now neglected phenomenon of the many conversions of male and female philosophers who were part of the circle of Husserl, a converted Jew himself – philosophers who looked back to phenomenology: from Adolph Reinach to Max Scheler, from Edith Stein to Hedwig Conrad Martius. As is well known, the journey of Edith Stein, which had led her to the small cage of a Carmelite convent within the large cage that Germany had become for the Jews, ended in Auschwitz. Her final journey, as Günther Anders wrote, "was even more heartbreaking than that of the others, of the thousands of human beings with whom she went to the crematoria, because, sitting among them, she played the role of a Carmelite nun as if at a costume party."217

There was no place in the Third Reich for Jews who had converted; although they were Christians, they would never become "true" Germans. Their assimilation seemed to be a provocation. In leveraging the proverbial Jewish "ability" to blend in, the assimilated Jews were an invisible enemy. Indeed, they

were “a state within a state.”[218]

The anti-Semitic paradigm that prevailed in this kind of context was not that of the Jew called upon to testify to the truth of Christianity; rather, it was the paradigm depicted in the biblical story of Esther, the Jewish queen of Persia about whom the history of the world knows nothing, but whose *megillah* [book in the Old Testament] is much more realistic than many other biblical accounts. In this story, the Jews are accused of living separately from the Persians, following their own laws. The idea for solving the problem is to annihilate them all in a single day. Esther, an assimilated Jewess, reveals her identity and saves her people. A point of reference for the *marranos*, Esther represents the strangeness, obscure and treacherous, hostile and threatening, from which it is legitimate to defend oneself by pre-emptive annihilation. The modern theories of a Jewish plot adhere to this more decisively political paradigm.

But it is still necessary to underline the fact that, in the Nazi version of anti-Semitism, ancient theological stereotypes continued to surface, even in those cases where political categories seemed to prevail. Upon close consideration, a secular accusation that coalesced precisely in the notion of “Jewish blood” assailed German Judaism.[219] From this perspective, the Jewish people – diabolically astute, skillful at assimilating with “civilized” peoples out of a desire for power, had remained crudely savage. This would explain their thirst for Christian blood, which they purportedly used when they kneaded the dough for matzos at Passover. The accusation was, therefore, of vampirism and “ritual murder.”[220] The Jew was seen as a blood sucker, the vampire *par excellence* – and this was the origin of his “economic vampirism.” The Jewish money lender sucked the blood of Christians, just as the rabbis killed babies to make use of their blood in rituals.

In his unfinished novel *The Rabbi of Bacharach*, Heinrich Heine described a counterfeited scene of ritual murder: two Christians hide the corpse of a child under the table of Jews during the Passover celebration, so that they can accuse the Jews of vampirism. The rabbi realizes what has happened and flees with his wife Sara. While he unmasks the crime and laments the miserable condition of the Jews in the ghettos, vampirized by the

Christians, Heine sings the heartbroken dream of Sara, to whom "the Rhine seemed to murmur the melodies of the Agade."[221] But even Heine had to wake up, because his desperate attempt to be both Jewish *and* German was condemned to fail. He converted to Christianity and then returned to Judaism at the end of his life, choosing exile in Paris. Nietzsche wrote that "Germany has produced only one poet, besides Goethe – that is Heinrich Heine – and he was a Jew on top of that."[222] Heidegger observed: "This word [*Jude*, Jew] casts an unusual light on the poet Goethe. Goethe – Heine, 'the' poet of Germany."[223]

Behind the accusation of tainted blood lurks the curse of deicide, contained in the misunderstood verse from the Gospel of St. Matthew: "His blood is on us and on our children."[224] According to those who believed in the vampirism of the Jews, after having stained themselves with the blood of Christ, the Jews continued to shed Christian blood; in these accounts, the infant Jesus was sacrificed rather than the adult. The Jews – seen as a carnal people incapable of perceiving spiritual meaning and of recognizing the Messiah, even though they saw proofs of him everywhere – thought that they could achieve salvation and reach the next world not with the water of baptism, but through the blood of the Eucharist, the ritual of which was horrendously desecrated though ritual murder. Thus, they would murder a Christian and take his blood, imagining that they could reconcile the religion of Moses with the religion of Jesus, in a mixture where everything was contaminated – matzos and hosts, wine and blood.

Along with the idea of an "Aryan Christ," the obsession with "pure" blood re-emerged in the cults of National Socialism. Eugenics was used to leverage the concept of the "plasma of our forefathers" propagandized by the *völkisch* faith, to affirm the new models of racial biology, not vice versa.[225] The idea of transubstantiation converged with the *Blutmythos*: the Eucharistic body of the people was at the same time the flesh, vulnerable and mortal, of the warriormartyr; and blood, the original divine fluid, was a materialization of the consubstantiality between God and the German people, the new chosen people. Only if the blood remained uncontaminated could the *Volk* cross the threshold of eternity and become "*Volk im Werden*," a people in the making.

Among the more moderate “German Christians” and the *Deutschgläubige*, the proponents of a German Neopaganism, it was above all the latter who insisted upon purity of blood. As Rosenberg wrote: “Today a new faith is awakening – the Myth of the blood. . . . Nordic Blood represents the MYSTERIVM which has overcome and replaced the older sacraments.”[226] The German people were seen as a “community of the living and the dead” connected by blood, always the same blood, that returned to flow through the veins of those who lived and who, therefore, owed allegiance to the dead. Emblem of the eternal return of that which is the same, in this view the blood that circulated did not belong to the individual but only to the community, capable of manifesting the Third Reich, the worldly and otherworldly home of the *Deutschtum*. And the Reich could only be “millennial” if *deutsches Blut*, German blood, was preserved unaltered. The goal was not selection with the aim of creating a superman; it was the original purity whose longed-for return from the mythical past was considered to be the font of eternity. The symbol of this return was the cross with bent arms, the Swastika of salvation, turned on its axis to indicate the incessant regeneration of a race devoted to immortality.

Germany, Aryan and endogamic, could ensure a descendency from itself by going backward, with postmortem marriages, the frontier between life and death, in order not to give up a drop of its own blood.[227] To the mourning for the children not generated during the war was added the tragic destiny of the hero fallen in the cold nothingness of the Nordic hell. What happened to those dead men whose blood flooded the earth of the enemy, the vital space of the East that should have been Germanized? Their souls, covered with steel helmets, arose above the glacial steppe and incited their comrades to continue fighting against the Jewish–Bolshevist hordes. This is how they were depicted in the iconography of the time, calling out “we go before you.” If the ones who survived were “the worst,” inferior, unworthy to fight, those who fell, instead, were the “best” – those with the most precious blood of Germany, spilled for the final victory. As Heidegger wrote in 1941, “all that remains to us is the sacrifice of the best blood of the best [*das beste Blut der Besten*] of our own people.”[228]

16 “My ‘Attack’ on Husserl”

The funeral of Edmund Husserl, the Jewish phenomenologist who was a convert to Christianity and was devoted to the German fatherland, for which his family had shed a great tribute of blood, took place in Freiburg on April 29, 1938. Very few of his colleagues were present – from the School of Philosophy, only Gerhard Ritter, who would later write in his memoirs: “besides me, only a couple of other colleagues attended the funeral.”229 That evening, Karl Diehl, a professor of national economics, gave a brief commemorative speech before a small group that called themselves “the School of Honest People.”230

Heidegger did not attend the funeral, nor did he express his condolences. Many years later, he justified himself by saying that he had been “sick in bed” that day.231 He later admitted his mistake, not without a tone of resentment, in the interview that he gave to *Der Spiegel* in 1966: “That I failed to express again to Husserl my gratitude and respect for him upon the occasion of his final illness and death is a human failure that I apologized for in a letter to Mrs. Husserl.”232 On March 6, 1950, he wrote to Malvine Husserl: “I pray you to forgive me, in the wise goodness of your heart, the human failing into which I fell upon the passing of your husband. Beyond this failing, however, there has never been a trace of enmity much less of alienation in my feelings.”233

Even while in a cloistered convent, Edith Stein had continued to follow the last years of the life of her former professor, remaining in contact with another faithful pupil of Husserl, the Benedictine nun Adelgundis Jaegerschmid, née Amélie, a Jewess who had converted to Catholicism in 1921. Jaegerschmid, who was living in the convent of Saint Lioba in Freiburg, had been able to help the family of the great phenomenologist. Edith Stein wrote to her from the Carmelite convent in Cologne on May 15, 1938: “I know nothing at all about the funeral. There was nothing about it in the obituary notice. I wonder how the university acted? How did Heidegger react?”234

Silence and desolation surrounded Husserl’s death. On April 14, 1933, he had been “retired” from his teaching post; as of 1935, according to the “German law” invoked by Hitler’s Reich, he was a non-person. Just as there had been no demonstrations of

solidarity during his life, nothing was written to commemorate his death; no one dedicated a final homage to him. From his chair as a philosophy professor, Martin Heidegger, Husserl's former pupil, his successor, did not devote a single word to the passing of one of the greatest figures of twentieth-century philosophy. The Albert-Ludwig Universität of Freiburg, from whose list of professors Husserl's name had already been deleted, was dispensed from the obligation of commemorating him.

But when news of Husserl's death reached the Jewish University of Jerusalem, Hans Jonas commemorated his former professor in his first lecture and his first radio appearance in Israel, both the result of an enormous translation effort from German to Hebrew:235

> At the beginning of May, Edmund Husserl, one of the great philosophers of our time, died in Freiburg. He had been active as a teacher and scholar at the university there until his retirement in 1929, the leading figure in a school of philosophy to which students flocked and which exercised a profound influence on Germany's philosophical life. He taught a generation to think, experienced fame, and then died in obscurity, the world around him transformed and no longer willing to eulogize him. In the face of this silence in the country to which he gave so much, we are honor-bound to remember him here. He himself, who had turned his back on Judaism as a young man, who was a German professor and saw himself entirely as a servant of European learning, would certainly never have envisioned that what was neglected in Freiburg would be done in Jerusalem. The fact that today a student who sat at his feet years ago is allowed to memorialize him on Jerusalem radio in Hebrew is itself emblematic of our time.236

Neither Jonas nor Löwith hesitated to condemn Heidegger's behavior toward Husserl: "Heidegger proved his 'admiration and friendship' [ ] by not wasting or hazarding even a word of remembrance or of participation," observed Löwith.237 Jonas spoke of "shabby and disgraceful" behavior, and, in a lecture, provided his own reconstruction of what had happened.238

Even if it was with the automatism of a bureaucrat that Heidegger

had signed a decree that forbade "non-Aryans," and therefore Husserl as well, from entering university premises and even libraries; whether or not what is said in the re-edition of *Being and Time* that came out in 1941 is true – that Heidegger was forced to eliminate the dedication of the book to Husserl, as had been suggested to him by the publisher Neimeyer – these and other episodes, in spite of Heidegger's self-defense, have become part of the shared memories of Germany, finding evidence even in literary sources.

"You ontic dog! Alemannic dog! You dog with stocking cap and buckled shoes! What did you do with little Husserl? [. . .] You pre-Socratic Nazi dog!" This malignant parody from the famous novel *Dog Years* by Günter Grass – the final novel in his *Danzig Trilogy* – features various characters: the drifter, the deserter, the excommunist, and so on, including a Heideggerian philosopher who writes "Beyng" with a "y," speaks of dejection and nullification, and whose philosophical jargon is the source of innumerable caricatures and variations.239

The tension that pervaded the relationship between Husserl and Heidegger cannot be reduced to a tension that exacerbates the conflict between a teacher and student, nor to the tension of a philosophical disagreement. The letters that have been published up to now show an irremediable divergence that grew and became more acute over time. Upon close consideration, even the key term "phenomenology," which should have united them, actually separated them. "You and I are phenomenology," Husserl used to say before 1928, referring to Heidegger and himself.240 In a course that Heidegger taught in the Winter of 1930–1, he stated: "we would do better in the future to give the name of phenomenology only to that which Husserl himself has created and continues to produce."241

Heidegger's encounter with Husserl took place in the context of the latter's *Logical Investigations*, the work that introduced phenomenology between 1900 and 1901 and that Heidegger – as he himself recalled – read in 1909, during the first semester of his theological studies.242 The fascination that the two volumes by Husserl exerted on Heidegger did not, however, silence the latter's doubts and perplexities: on the one hand, according to Heidegger,

Husserl refuted “psychologism in logic,” and on the other hand, he described acts of conscience in the cognitive process, “thus another psychology.”243 If phenomenology was neither logic nor psychology, then what was it?

When Husserl arrived in Freiburg in 1916 and began teaching his courses, Heidegger had the opportunity to learn his method – that “phenomenological ‘way of seeing’” that prescinded both from an unverified use of philosophical knowledge and from a dialogue with the great philosophers. For Heidegger, this meant separating himself from Aristotle and the other Greek thinkers, just at a time when his encounter with their texts seemed to be productive for his own reflections.

Although Heidegger considered his encounter with Husserl’s work to be an “episode,” and even though he expressed his intolerance for phenomenology, which he saw as “too narrow and bloodless,” he intensified his study of Husserl.244 In 1919, Heidegger became an assistant to Husserl, who for his part helped Heidegger in his academic career. Starting in 1923, Heidegger was in Marburg; as the personal relationship between the two men began to fade, their philosophical disagreement intensified. Their encounter in the Spring of 1926 in Todtnauberg, on the themes of *Being and Time*, and subsequently their work together on the entry on “Phenomenology” for the *Encylopedia Britannica* in the Autumn of 1927, put the seal on the growing, inevitable distancing of the two.245 Husserl’s *Randbemerkungen* – the extremely critical notes that he wrote in the margins of his copy of *Being and Time* – were followed by the speech punctuated with sarcastic allusions that Heidegger gave on April 8, 1929, on the occasion of Husserl’s seventieth birthday, and, several months later, his inaugural address “What is Metaphysics?,” which marked his return to Freiburg and his “departure from phenomenology.”246 Husserl responded in the note that he added to the English edition of his *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, and above all in the lecture he gave in Berlin on June 10, 1931, before a crowd of “1600 listeners” in a stadium-like atmosphere, where he attacked Heidegger.247

But, over and above these episodes, there remained Husserl’s

bitterness toward his former pupil, to whom he would have liked to have entrusted the future of phenomenology, and Heidegger's resentment toward the philosopher whose monologues, and whose living "for his mission of being 'the founder of phenomenology,'" he detested.248 Above all, there remained the motives for the philosophical disagreement, which, in all of its complexity, still cannot be said to have been resolved today.249 Was Heidegger's turn toward hermeneutics an internal deepening of phenomenology? Or was his rupture with phenomenology the result of differences that had been announcing themselves from the very beginning, of that "sideways distance" that Heidegger himself had perceived early on?250 The question – as Gadamer observed – has to do with Being, and with the still-metaphysical concept that phenomenology has of it.251

Husserl's motto, "we must go back to the 'things themselves,'" was disruptive.252 Thinking could be reduced neither to the construction of theories nor to the history of philosophy. To go back to things meant describing them as they appear, in their visible and sharable phenomenality. In order to do this, it was necessary to free oneself of any filter and rely on intuition only. The things to which Husserl wanted to return were not independent of awareness; rather, they existed thanks to the intentionality of awareness. Thus, there was no reality that did not arise in this way. Hence, it is not surprising that intentionality could be taken up by hermeneutics.253

Where, then, should the disagreement between Husserl and Heidegger be sought? At the beginning and at the end of their philosophizing. For Husserl, the point of departure for a professional philosopher was an *epoché*, a suspension of natural behavior – that is, of the quotidian view of things – a phenomenological reduction by means of which it is possible to see the secret operations that constitute our experience of life in the world. For Heidegger, philosophy sprang from a conversion that is not a deliberative act, but rather occurs as part of existence, involving philosophy even in its own emotional make-up, and urging it to ask questions not only about beings, but even about existence itself, to the point of raising the question of Being. Since, for Heidegger, philosophy was not a *Beruf* (a profession) but rather a *Berufung* (a vocation), the question of Being was a

question for everyone and for no one, because everyone is invested in it. But no one is inherently a philosopher; one becomes a philosopher only when, investigating the issue of beings, he transcends its immediacy, and turns to the issue of Being.

With his transcendental subject, Husserl remained anchored to modern philosophy, to the self-aware "cogito" that presumes that it can think without needing others, to the Cartesian ego that is occupied only with itself. For Heidegger, the subject was not an unshakable foundation; on the contrary, it was shaken, because it was temporal and finite. And just as it was no longer possible to have the original ego as the point of departure, so it was necessary to liberate oneself from the apodictic model of science and renounce, in philosophy, the myth of the ultimate foundation that Husserl was still pursuing. For Heidegger, the point of convergence and of sharing, which can occasionally be reached, was always finite and limited.

For Heidegger, phenomenology was not a philosophical direction.[254] Instead, it indicated the research path that responded to the way in which beings appear and reveal themselves, coming out of hiding. But hadn't Aristotle already thought this? And wouldn't it be more correct to speak of ontology, given the fact that that *logos* allows beings to be seen as they manifest themselves? And truth, which can no longer be understood as conformity, isn't it here *aletheia*, "unconcealedness"? This is why Heidegger, following the instance of phenomenology, which required freedom from worn-out schemas, could continue to study the ancient Greek philosophers in order to achieve an original experience of Being.

Thus, for Heidegger, Husserl, with his transcendental phenomenology, which over time took on an even more scientific character, fell under the heading of metaphysics, ultimately reducing beings to entities and totally omitting the *Seinsfrage* (question of being).

Husserl felt pushed aside and betrayed; he thought about taking a stand in an article. In a letter to his friend Roman Imgarden, dated December 26, 1927, he confided his profound disappointment at the philosophical and human distance at which he had been put by Heidegger, who, among other things, "drags his entire youth with

him."[255] Nevertheless, he perceived that there was something more. And several years later, in May 1933, Husserl mentioned Heidegger in a letter to his former pupil, the philosopher Dietrich Mahnke, who was then teaching in Marburg and was among the few former students who had remained in contact with him:

> The perfect conclusion to this supposed bosom friendship of two philosophers was his very public, very theatrical entrance into the Nazi Party on May 1. Prior to that was his self-initiated break in relations with me – in fact, soon after his appointment at Freiburg – and, over the last few years, his anti-Semitism, which he came to express with increasing vigor – even against the coterie of his most enthusiastic students as well as around the department.[256]

Many philosophers appear in the *Black Notebooks* – above all Nietzsche, but also Aristotle, Plato, Saint Augustine, and even Thomas Aquinas. Husserl's name is found in an unequivocal context – section 24 of *Ponderings XII*, dating from 1939; this is the section in which Heidegger purported to unmask the connection of complicity between Judaism and metaphysics. It is here, in a passage that constitutes a sort of parenthesis, a pondering that goes beyond what he had already said, that Heidegger admitted and in fact defended his attack on Husserl. What is more, the "attack," *Angriff*, introduced polemically for the first time between quotation marks, as if Heidegger were taking up again an accusation that he had already made several times against Husserl, would be legitimized, because it goes beyond Husserl and was, for all intents and purposes, directed against the machination of the entity that was identified with Judaism:

> (Thus Husserl's step to the phenomenological attitude, taken in explicit opposition to psychological explanation and to the historiological calculation of opinions, will be of lasting importance – and yet this attitude never reaches into the domains of the essential decisions; instead, it entirely presupposes the historiological tradition of philosophy. The necessary result shows itself at once in the turning toward a neo-Kantian transcendental philosophy, and this turn ultimately made inevitable a progression to Hegelianism in the formal sense. My "attack" on Husserl is not directed to

> him alone and is not at all directed inessentially – the attack is directed against the neglect of the question of Being, i.e., against the essence of metaphysics as such, the metaphysics on whose ground the machination of Being is able to determine history. The attack establishes a historical moment of the supreme decision between the primacy of beings and the grounding of the truth of Being.)257

Heidegger's criticism was always the same: giving credit to Husserl for having inaugurated phenomenology should not lead one to ignore his limitations. First and foremost among these was that of his not having liberated himself from the schemas of transcendental philosophy, which, while they prevented him from having a hermeneutic dialogue with the Greek philosophers – consigning him instead to philosophical historiography – pushed him toward the neo-Kantian trends from which he would have liked to distance himself. But Heidegger's philosophical reproach of Husserl became even more precise: Husserl remained within the context of metaphysics; he never arrived at the place where the decision about Being was made. In this sense, Heidegger's attack was directed *not only* against Husserl. It was not only a personal attack, and therefore "inessential," *unwesentlich*. Its target was the essence, the *Wesen* of metaphysics – that is, the *Machenschaft*, the machination that attempts to determine the course of history by imposing the predominance of the being and concealing Being. In this epochal conflict, Heidegger was purportedly intervening in order to institute "a historical moment of the supreme decision," that which, against the predominance of beings, would make possible the foundation of the truth of Being.

In this argument, as Heidegger himself for that matter admitted in passing, the various levels become perilously confused. It is not only a matter of the prevalence of metaphysics. Rather, Heidegger was re-proposing the clash with Judaism, which was purportedly threatening to dominate the Western world. The ontological question was revealed as being a political question as well. And the "attack" – a word used by an obviously belligerent philosopher – was charged, as Husserl had perceived, with meanings that went well beyond personal or political motivations. Husserl was being attacked by Heidegger as an exponent of Judaism, as if being Jewish conditioned one's metaphysical thinking, as if one's

Denkart, one's way of thinking, were an effect of being a Jew. Was it perhaps because he was a Jew that Husserl could not reach the place of decision, that he did not arrive at the question of Being? In the line that precedes the long passage between parentheses cited above, Heidegger wrote: "The more originary and inceptual the future decision and questions become, all the more inaccessible will they remain to this 'race.'"258 The issue of Husserl would be superfluous and irritating, according to Heidegger, if Husserl himself were the target – because, since he was a Jew, he couldn't help but think metaphysically – or if his metaphysical position were a particular product of Judaism.

The fact that, in the *Black Notebooks* dating from 1948, Heidegger once again wrote about Husserl, to whom he devoted an entire section, is an indication of remorse and guilt. Perhaps Heidegger had realized that the "attack" on his former professor had been one of the darkest chapters in his life. And he was evidently also moved by the need to provide his own version.

> *Husserl*. Ever since Husserl, starting in 1930/31, took a position in public lectures, which were already rather like rallies, against me and my work, rejecting it as non-philosophy (cfr. the Afterword to his *Ideas*, 1930/31), I left him behind. But I have never undertaken even the most minimal action against Husserl. Whoever says that I allegedly banished him from the university, impeding his access to the library, is nothing but a liar. Of his own volition, Husserl had been emeritus since 1928; from that time on, he neither taught classes nor gave exercises; he never used the university library apart from a few exceptions in 1920 and the following years. What was there to banish? His works were never removed, as had been prescribed for Jewish authors; just as a National Socialist book was never acquired, for example Rosenberg and the like, nor was there affixed a "portrait of the Führer," according to the order that had been carried out in other departments. I don't say this as a defense, but only as a statement of fact; there is also the fact that, between 1933 and 1944, as previously, and with the same neutrality, I spoke of the significance of Husserl's phenomenology and the necessity to study his *Logical Investigations*. I have never uttered a word of criticism, neither in my classes, nor

exercises, which would have been possible, legitimate, and certainly not a crime.

I left Husserl behind; it was a painful necessity. Any other attitude on my part could have been interpreted as a gesture of courtesy. But those who speak of a despicable betrayal do nothing more than vent their vengeance, without knowing what happened – that is, that the journey of my thinking had been considered rubbish, that propagandistically an escape had been sought, when my journey could not be stopped. And now a great historical falsification is being enacted.

And yet it seems to me that, starting with *Being and Time*, my efforts have been the most worthy testimony of my debt to Husserl – that I learned from him and have witnessed his journey is demonstrated by the fact that I did *not* remain a follower of his, nor, indeed, was I ever one. But it was precisely this that clashed with the internal regulation, well before National Socialism and the persecution of Jews were talked about. Given that denigrations and insults are still in fashion in 1948, and that no one bothers to judge on the basis of a knowledge of things, nor to study in depth my works or even my courses, which are often adopted as proofs of my thinking, it will be necessary to again emphasize this, not for public opinion, nor as a defense, but as a statement of fact. Cfr. *Teacher*.[259]

17 Heidegger, Jünger, and the Topology of the Jew

Already suggested by Löwith in 1946, the association of Heidegger's name with Jünger's is justified not only by a relationship that, albeit at a distance, went on for decades, but also by their memorable encounter regarding nihilism, their epistolary exchanges, and finally by the volume *Zu Ernst Jünger* published in 2004, which gathers together writings, notes for seminars, and marginal annotations – in short, Heidegger's entire laboratory focusing on the work of the great writer.[260] In fact, the relationship between Heidegger and Jünger, although it evolved with deep syntony, was not characterized by reciprocity: Heidegger never had the importance for Jünger that the latter embodied for him. In a conversation with Antonio Gnoli and

Franco Volpi in 1995, Jünger admitted several times that he had had a "closer" relationship of true friendship with Carl Schmitt, with whom he had shared a political conviction as well as the distinction "between friend and enemy" that "exploded like a mine with no noise."[261]

With mystical exaltation, Jünger had described the "storm of steel" of the Great War in which he had fought as a volunteer and been wounded fourteen times.[262] Characterized by contempt for danger, the triumph of strength and courage, the constant challenge of death, war was elevated by Jünger to the level of an "inner experience," necessary, even after the end of the hostilities, both in political life and in the tragic flow of existence.[263] For Jünger, conflict remained the cipher of existence, rendered more acute by the abysmal ontological chasm that separated one from the "enemy," the foreigner, the Other understood as the negation of one's own way of being, while that no man's land expanded, among the trenches, a zone of suspension of rights, of savage destruction, of an orgy of fury, of exposure of naked life to unchained mechanical power.[264] Fire and blood decorated the heroic universe depicted by Jünger, where Nature was merged with technology in an unprecedented cosmic harmony, and where the new man was the *Arbeiter*, the warrior-worker, cold and metallic, forged through combat. The de-humanization of the enemy, indifference to the value of life, anti-humanism, the eroticism of the warrior community, pagan exaltation of the elements of Nature and of primordial violence, all flowed together in a "mysticism of war," to quote Walter Benjamin, who had no tender feelings toward Jünger "and his friends," those "pioneers of rearmament" whose bellicose theories had "the most rabidly decadent origins" and were "nothing other than the uninhibited translation of the principles of *l'art pour l'art* to war itself."[265] Benjamin felt fascination neither for the soldier who had survived to bear witness to the world war, who in the postwar period defended "this 'landscape of the front,' his true home," nor for that "sinister runic humbug" that would soon have to be shattered.[266] The theoretician of a "new nationalism," Jünger hoped for and fomented, also with his intense publishing activity, the destruction of the Weimar Republic, even before he began to identify with the apocalyptic intentions of Hitler's regime, albeit without registering

as a member of the Nazi party and while maintaining a haughty disdain for the plebian vulgarity of the brownshirts, which too often, as in the case of Heidegger, has been taken as a form of "resistance" to Nazism.[267] An official of the Wehrmacht in Paris during the occupation, Jünger spent a brief period of time in 1943 on the Eastern front, where he witnessed the extermination of the Jews in the gas chambers; he recorded this in his diary and mentioned it in his correspondence with Schmitt, within a broader reflection on the militant nihilism that had led to the nothingness of ashes.[268] In his reply, Schmitt reminded Jünger about the work *Salvation through the Jews* by Léon Bloy, which he judged to be "always greater and more true."[269]

In his conversation with Gnoli and Volpi, Jünger confessed that he had "intensely" read the work of Léon Bloy, "this intolerant Catholic," particularly his "pamphlet *Salvation through the Jews*, [. . .] a text that introduces into the *arcana* a magical, sacral power."[270] Bloy purportedly inspired Jünger because he had "grasped, among other things, the reality of the demoniacal."[271]

The controversial book by the French journalist Bloy, who was very well known in Catholic circles, took its title from the Gospel of St. John (4:22): "salus ex Iudaeis est – he sotería ek tôn iudaíon estín."[272] Bloy's book is a grim, violent synthesis of the anti-Judaism of the end of the nineteenth century; it becomes outright anti-Semitism with declarations such as "disinfectant is prohibited, but then people complain about having bedbugs." Bloy's book retraces all of the theological *topoi* – always returning, however, to the accusation of deicide: "it is enough for me to know that the Jews committed the supreme Crime, compared to which all other crimes are virtues."[273]

Jünger had made pronouncements about "the Jewish question" several times in his political essays, although he had maintained that the "German question" did not end there.[274] The *Jude* and the *Arbeiter* – what could be more distant than the Jew from the warrior-worker, the image of the German who was proud to be part of the new technical-military order? "Germany is our great mother, Europe for us is only a concept that should be subordinated to the nation."[275] For Jünger, belonging to the nation meant being connected to the "mysterious current of

blood."[276]

Jünger wove a veritable panegyric about blood, which "is not an eminently biological element, but rather a chiefly metaphysical concept," in an essay in which he answered the question: "What is blood?"[277] In an obscure metaphysics, he traced blood back to the most intimate, hidden source, a "secret language, predating all other languages." To attempt to demonstrate the value of blood by turning to science and to Nature was like "letting a servant testify for his master." For Jünger, blood was "a combustible substance burned by the metaphysical flame of destiny," whose magnetic force did not require signs of recognition. The "banners of blood" do not possess logic, but rather a symbolic value: "It is blood that makes us feel like strangers or like family."[278] For the new nationalism, which aspired to strengthen the German borders, Judaism, rather than a supranational power, was an "anti-national power," an enemy of the state. And Jünger's tone became threatening: once the state had become "purely nationalistic," these powers would "experience their ugly day."[279]

The influence of Schmitt, and of the friend–enemy schema, clearly emerged in Jünger's article "On Nationalism and on the Jewish Question," written at the request of Paul Nicolaus Coßmann, who had wanted to open up a debate on the role of Jews in Germany in a special issue of the *Süddeutsche Monatsshefte*.[280]

In Jünger's writings, age-old stereotypes alternate with unusual, effective views. The first is that of the Jew as a remnant of the feudal world, whose presence, especially in representative posts, appears to be an "esthetic defect."[281] "Endowed with talent and endurance," ready to make use of "men and power," with that "absence of prejudices that is the distinctive sign of his race," the Jew stealthily insinuates himself, because he is the "master of all masks," devoid of creativity, incapable of form, shapeless. The Jew is an obstacle to the morphology of the Germans; he threatens their culture. Against this *Zivilisationsjude*, "Jew of civilization," Jünger unleashed an attack, while nevertheless keeping his distance from that brand of anti-Semitism that sought to make the Jews innocuous, like "swarms of bacteria and schizomycetes." The clash, for Jünger, had to take place on another level, all the more so if, behind that power, "one suspects that there is a higher priesthood."[282] The Jew of civilization is "the son of liberalism,"

that is, of leveling and assimilation. Thus, he tries to not let himself be recognized – to the point of achieving that "base folly of being able to be a Jew in Germany." But if the Jew were driven out into the open, returned to his "own laws," he would cease to be dangerous.283 And let there be no misunderstanding: this does not mean that his rights would be legitimized. If, in very violent pages, Jünger relegated the assimilated Jew to Zionism or to "Jewish orthodoxy," it was to curtail his presence, to confine and ghettoize him. Only in this way could "the German gain his own proper element"; only in this way would the "foreigner be condemned to the most profound prostration, like a fish thrown onto a volcanic island."284

To set apart the Jew was possible, therefore, if the "German will" were affirmed, taking on the form that should have characterized the Reich. Was there still a place for Jews within the Reich? Only *as Jews*, not as Germans. Otherwise – and this would be "the final alternative" – they would have to choose "to not be," *nicht zu sein*.285 Rather than being an echo of that euthanasia of Judaism already hoped for in the past, by figures from Kant to Wagner, this alternative returned to the friend–enemy logic of Schmitt: the need to single out the Jews (as would subsequently happen), to make of them a visible enemy, devoid of citizenship, outside of the German *nomos* – threatened, therefore, with elimination.286

How is the figure of the Jew as delineated by Jünger distinguished from Heidegger's version? What are the affinities and the differences? An answer can only be found in Heidegger's complex criticism of Jünger.

Heidegger was already beginning to read Jünger's works in the early 1930s: *Total Mobilization* (1930), *The Worker* (1932), *On Pain* (1934). But rather than a reading, this was more a hermeneutic pondering spurred on by the writings of an incomparable witness of political catastrophe, "the only true successor of Nietzsche."287 In fact, for Heidegger, Jünger was more radical than Nietzsche, because his thinking itself was "a form of will to power."288 The world that came out of Jünger's pen was mobilized by work, a force that could be more devastating than war; for the first time, Jünger indicated the destructive power not in chaos, but rather in its opposite – in the organization of

technology. For Heidegger, however, Jünger offered admirable descriptions, but never arrived at the philosophical question;[289] he failed to see that the realm of the worker was still the old world, supported by metaphysics, and that workers, even when they were masters and owners, were still "servants of the abandonment of Being."[290]

Heidegger's reproach that Jünger had remained within the realm of metaphysics was recurring. So, for example, he believed that Jünger did not understand the meaning of decision; he assumed that it was an act of will and reason, while for Heidegger *Ent-scheidung* (de-cision or division), which was related to the schism between beings and Being, disclosed the truth of Being.[291]

But it was around the "line" that the contention between Heidegger and Jünger became most heated: Jünger's famous essay, written on the occasion of Heidegger's seventieth birthday, was entitled "Über die Linie." In German, the word *über* is ambiguous; it can mean "on" or "beyond." In his essay, Jünger was using the word in the sense of "beyond": the line was the "zero meridian," the limit to which the world had been pushed by the acceleration of technology, and where, in the crumbling of the old order, in the reduction of every resource, everything seemed to vanish into nothingness. It was the time of nihilism which, although it was approaching the end, was still not complete. "Beyond the line" did not mean for Jünger going beyond nihilism, which would be like wanting to leap beyond one's own shadow; rather, it meant entering into that realm in which nothingness was an essential part of reality.[292] While he described planetary nihilism, Jünger perceived in that "desert" – the postwar period in the broadest sense – an oasis of freedom in the "savage land," where the anarchist, the solitary resister, could find refuge in the Germanic interiority of the forest.

The viaticum of thought, the solitary path in the forest, the forest itself, connected Jünger and Heidegger, who met for the first time in the summer of 1948 in Todtnauberg. The place of their encounter, which was very positive, was in the shadows of the Black Forest, a metaphor for the withdrawal of combatants, temporarily defeated, who had left metaphysics and re-emerged onto familiar heights.[293]

But it was precisely on the issue of metaphysics that Heidegger's criticism of Jünger was focused. For him, a "beyond" the line was not possible. "Über die Linie" for him meant "on the line."[294] Heidegger appreciated the phenomenology of nihilism outlined by Jünger, but philosophically he was much more cautious, and he warned that simply speaking about "beyond" was already a sign of the will to power. Where philosophical anamnesis was lacking, the risk was that metaphysics would become "current and empty."[295] Jünger was a prisoner of nihilism; his angulation, the place in which he narrated, his language, remained anchored to the oblivion of Being. In the absence of verticality, Jünger did not look upward to regard the question of Being; he did not scan history and epochal destinations. Heidegger's famous proposal still resonates today: rather than speaking of *Überwindung* (overcoming), it was better to speak of *Verwindung* (twisting or torsion). It was not a matter of overcoming or surpassing metaphysics, but rather of recovering from it, as one recovers from an illness, enduring that to which one nevertheless still remains bound.

The "line" was a trench – a trench within a world that remained powerfully nihilistic. Crossing the line was the motion of the soldier who pushes himself into enemy territory; indeed, he attempts to trace the enemy's cartography, to pinpoint his location, to define his identity. Jünger's line once again marked Schmitt's boundary between friend and enemy. His topography of the Jew remained within this contraposition, within metaphysics. For Jünger, the Jew could find no place within the history of Being. He was the demonic force that assailed in vain the divine outpost of the Germanic hero; he was the enemy who must be annihilated. For Heidegger, instead, the line was the extreme limit, the *eschaton* that suggested a step backward. Before establishing a topography, it was necessary to have a topology. This held true for nihilism, but it also held true for the Jew. It made no sense to metaphysically describe the Jew as an enemy, using a language that – as Heidegger once noted – resembled a "bulletin from the supreme command of the *Wehrmacht*."[296] Instead, the Jew's position within the history of Being – if it existed – should be identified. Thus, it was not a contraposition, but rather an *Erörterung*, an elucidation that was also the arrival at a place; not

a *trans lineam* topography, but rather a *de linea* topology.297 Rather than a clear line – that of the boundary of war – Heidegger referred to a border that was an opening, the *eschaton* as the inaugural beginning of something else.

18 The Enemy: Heidegger versus Schmitt

Since the 1930s, many authors, from Strauss to Kuhn, from Marcuse to Löwith, have drawn attention to a possible parallel between Heidegger and Schmitt.298 Jaspers connected them in his indicting observations of December 22, 1945:

> Heidegger, Baeumler and Carl Schmitt are the three professors who, while being very different one from the other, all attempted to attain intellectual access to the highest echelons of the National Socialist movement. In vain. In reality, they only provided proof of their own great intellectual capacity by making the fame of German philosophy fall into disgrace. For this reason I perceive in their case the tragic face of evil.299

Both Heidegger and Schmitt, albeit with ups and downs, were members of the political elite, receiving positions and assignments of great strategic importance within the regime. Neither one of them ever truly distanced himself from Nazism, and even after 1945, they never felt compelled to make excuses or justify what they had done. In the final analysis, both were anti-Semites – and theirs was not an accidental anti-Semitism, but rather one that was rooted in their thinking.

But beyond this historical commonality or political affinity, the differences between Heidegger and Schmitt are considerable; they clearly emerge when we consider the disaster that befell, very early on, Heidegger's plan to change not only the university system, but also the entire "spiritual" life of Germany, versus the success of Schmitt, who for years played a key role in the jurisdiction of the Third Reich. But the truly profound divergences should be sought elsewhere – in their thinking.

In a letter dated August 22, 1933, Heidegger, who had been rector of the University of Freiburg for only a short time, thanked Schmitt for having sent him the third edition of his essay *The*

Concept of the "Political." At that time, Schmitt had already made a name for himself with his writings on political theology. Heidegger's goal was to ensure the presence of the noted jurist at his own university.

Esteemed Herr Schmitt,

Thank you for having sent me your essay, which I already know from the second edition and which contains a very significant pointer.

I truly hope to be able to talk about it someday with you in person.

I was very happy that in your citation of Heraclitus you did not forget the *basileús*, which confers its full meaning upon the entire passage, if an overall interpretation of it is given. For years now I have had ready a similar interpretation relating to the notion of truth – the *édeixe* and *epoíese* that appear in fragment 53.

But now I find myself in the midst of the *pólemos*, and the literary aspect must recede into the background.

Today I would like only to tell you that I have high hopes for your decisive collaboration, because here it is necessary to completely reconstruct from within the Department of Jurisprudence, with regard to both its scholarly and its pedagogical administration.

Unfortunately, the situation here is quite desolate. It is becoming increasingly urgent to muster the spiritual energy that will pave the way to what is to come.

For today, I close with cordial regards

Heil Hitler!

Yours, Heidegger[300]

Aside from the reference to Heraclitus' *basileús*, this letter is written in conventional language, destined not to have any follow-up. Schmitt returned to the chair that he had already held in Berlin. It is not known whether he ever met Heidegger in person. In his book on Saint Paul, Taubes made a reference to a story that Schmitt purportedly told him: in 1934, Schmitt was put on a night

train by Göring, along with other German state advisors and professors, including Heidegger; they were being sent to Rome to speak to Mussolini.[301] To this rather legendary story can be added the eyewitness account of the American interpreter Gary Ulmen, whom Schmitt purportedly told that he had met Heidegger in Berlin in 1944, when, on the eve of Germany's defeat, they spoke about the destruction of Germany.[302] The relationship between Schmitt and Heidegger was always mediated by Jünger, who, nevertheless, remained closer to the jurist than to the philosopher. But, above all, it was never clear what Heidegger meant by his apparently flattering judgment of Schmitt's work.

In Heidegger's seminar on Hegel's "Philosophy of Right," which he taught during the Winter semester of 1934–5 but which was not published until 2011, there emerged a very different judgment, both on the concept of "the political," and on the friend–enemy relationship on which it is based.[303] This seminar contains observations – which are anything but extemporaneous – that connect coherently with Heidegger's political vision.

It is not reckless to say that Schmitt's political and legal thinking developed around his reflections on the concept of the enemy. Schmitt defined himself as "the last knowing representative of *ius publicum Europaeum*."[304] These reflections were expressed in *The Concept of the "Political,"* which first appeared in 1927 and was subsequently reprinted and re-worked in a third edition in 1932. What Schmitt meant by the adjective "political" used as a noun was the most radical way to unite a group of human beings and oppose that group to other groups: "The political is the most intense and extreme antagonism."[305] This is because existence itself is what is at stake: the "political" arises in proximity to death, in the trenches of life, where, faced by the ultimate threat, the gravest danger, common defense asserts itself. In the existential depths, which the "political" represented for Schmitt, the echoes of *Being and Time* are unmistakable. Political existence for Schmitt was a "being for death." And it was connected to a mortal struggle against the enemy. But who was the enemy?

For Schmitt, the conceptual distinction that forms the basis of and manifests the political sphere is between friend, *Freund*, and

enemy, *Feind*. Not derivable from other distinctions, valid in and of itself, this distinction is analogous to the distinction between good and evil in the moral sphere, and between beauty and ugliness in the esthetic sphere. Because it is based upon itself, it intersects – but does not merge with – these other distinctions. The enemy might be handsome and good, but nevertheless he remains the enemy. Here already there emerges the autonomy of the "political."306 In what turns out to be more an ontological contraposition than a conceptual distinction, Schmitt's interest focused almost exclusively on the enemy; and in order to define the enemy, Schmitt made use of both Greek philosophy and the Christian tradition. The enemy cannot be reduced to a mere competitor, as happens in liberalism, nor to a simple adversary. Nor can he be confined to the private sphere.

The separation between a private enemy and a public enemy, which some languages pass over in silence, is decisive. Yet this is not the case with the Greek and the Latin languages, which have two different words: *polémios* and not *echthrós*, and, in the sense understood by Plato in the *Republic, hostis* and not *inimicus*.307 "The enemy is solely the public enemy."308 In a corollary added in 1938, while referring to the original public meaning of *Freund* – blood friend, tribal comrade – Schmitt rehabilitated the German word *Feind*, for which – albeit the root has not been clarified and some etymologies have indicated a connection with *fijan*, that is, *hassen* (to hate) – he proposed a contiguity with *Fehde* (feud). Given that the word "feud" designates a situation in which one is exposed to mortal enmity, the German language, thanks to *Feind* – the antagonist in a feud – would contain the concept of a public enemy.309

But what about the commandment in the Gospels, "Love your enemies," which Schmitt, a Catholic, could not ignore? He got around the difficulty precisely through the separation between public and private.

> The often quoted "Love your enemies" (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:27) reads "diligite inimicos vestros," "apapâte toùs echthroùs," and not "diligite hostes vestros." No mention is made of a political enemy.310

Only in the private sense did it make sense to Schmitt to love

one's enemy as an *inimicus* – he who hates us. The "Christian" commandment to love stops at the borderline where the public enemy appears – he who wages war against us. The biblical passage, Schmitt declared, applies only to affective relationships; it has nothing to do with political antagonism. In fact, it would be possible to privately love the enemy against whom one is obliged to wage war. The example to which Schmitt turned was deliberately ambivalent: "Never in the thousand-year struggle between Christians and Moslems did it occur to a Christian to surrender rather than defend Europe."311

To not clearly distinguish between the private and public enemy, to imagine a love that goes beyond borders, would threaten the very concept of "political." The disappearance of the enemy "would toll the death knell of the political."312 The distinction must be pure, because otherwise the effects would be devastating. Nevertheless, Schmitt seemed to be aware that he was moving between controversial frontiers, labile borders, along which his discourse could be ruined. And in the end, as Derrida observed, "it is against the threat of this ruin that [. . .] discourse takes form."313 It should be noted that when Derrida attributed the ontological friend–enemy opposition to Schmitt, Heidegger's latest lectures and seminars had not yet been published.

For Schmitt, a group of people who renounced the possibility of deciding who to consider and treat as an enemy would for that very reason renounce their own political unity.314 Before developing any strategy or tactic, it is necessary to define who is the enemy – which is possible only in a world where war is the ultimate horizon, where all of life is a war and every man is a combatant. A world without war would be a world without enemies, and therefore a world without politics. War does not derive from politics, but it is its presupposition: "war follows from enmity"; indeed, it is "the most extreme consequence of enmity," because it results in the physical killing of the other, the absolute negation of existence.315 "The foe" – wrote Schmitt's former student Franz Neumann in 1941 – "is in the last resort anyone who must be exterminated physically."316 In short, one could say: *neco ergo sum* – "I kill, therefore I am."317 In this perspective, rather than a being-for-death, existence is a being because of putting people to death. Schmitt's *Feind* is, for all intents and

purposes, the opposite of the Hebrew *lo tirtzach*, "Thou shalt not kill."

But the question still remains open: Who is the enemy? As Schmitt specified, "The criterion of the friend-and-enemy distinction in no way implies that one particular nation must *forever* be the friend or enemy of another specific nation."318 Although it should always be decided who one's enemy is, the enemy can vary in the course of historical events. The historical enemy would always be different. However, in Schmitt's pages another figure seems to emerge from the shadows: the *eternal enemy* who never changes and who, in his irreducible otherness, goes beyond the confines of history itself. He is "the other, the stranger; and it is sufficient for his nature that he is, in a specially intense way, existentially something different and alien."319 Thus, the distinction is also discrimination and, moved by the anxiety of maintaining a clear boundary, it is xenophobic purification. Against this enemy, conflict cannot be decided "by a previously determined general norm nor by the judgment of a disinterested and therefore neutral third party."320 Rather, superseding the "political," he proposes "the definitively final war of humanity," where the enemy, transformed into "an inhuman monster," should not only be defeated, "fended off," but "*definitively* destroyed."321 The enemy, easily recognizable in this inhuman and absolute concept, with which the Other, a stranger to the political, is cast out of the human race, is the eternal enemy, who is chosen; he is the elective enemy: Israel.

The English, the French, the Americans, even the Russians, were seen by Schmitt as external, temporary political enemies. Even "the communist" – noted Schmitt in 1947 – "can improve and be transformed." But the Jew remained a Jew. "The assimilated Jew especially is the true enemy."322 Etymologically, *evèr* indicates the other side, the opposite shore; the Jew, crossing over – *avar* – disrupts the order of national boundaries. This is the most intolerable provocation for the concept of "the political." The Jew is the guest, *hospes, Gast*, inside the German state. But he is not a foreigner, *Fremder*, in the form of an *Ausländer*; he is not the foreigner from across the border, because he could be, and in fact is, a German citizen. Although he is "other," he is the Other who is

nearest and who, in his disturbing intimacy, undermines the boundaries of the German identity.

For Schmitt, the Jew conveyed both an external and an internal danger, provoking a shrinking into itself of the nation, and at the same time legitimizing the politics of expansion. Germany was called upon to defend itself. Schmitt was precise: "The Jew should not interest us for himself; what we are looking for is [. . .] the uncontaminated purity of our German people."[323] Nevertheless, it is evident how important the Jews were in Schmitt's "ragingly conservative" theses, not only because for him it was against the Jewish identity that the German nation was constituted, but also because defining what a Jew was meant establishing who the enemy was, the lynchpin of Schmitt's political and legal thinking.[324]

This importance, along with the "depth" of Schmitt's anti-Semitism, was emphasized by Taubes in his 1985 essay "Carl Schmitt: Apocalyptic Prophet of the Counterrevolution":

> I have absolutely no doubt that the Jewish problem tormented Schmitt for the whole of his life, that 1936 was merely a "timely" opportunity to take a stand on a problem that, for him, had quite other depths. He was a Christian, and of the people who looked enviously upon those who "are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came." [Paul, *Letter to the Romans*, chapter 9 in Martin Luther's German translation] Christianity was for Schmitt always "Judaism for the people," against whose power he was ever ready to rise up.[325]

In Schmitt's writings, biographical, historical, and speculative motives came together in a form of anti-Semitism that should be seen against the background of late nineteenth-century German

Catholicism and, therefore, of the theology whose concepts flowed into his political theory. It was not only the prejudices of "race" that were determining factors in Schmitt's thought, but also the age-old stereotypes and the never dormant resentments of anti-Jewish hatred, re-ignited by the threat of modernity. For Schmitt as for others, "Jewification" was looming over the world. What he

called, using a substantive adjective, *das Jüdische* – that which is Jewish – was a quality of every negative aspect in the modern world: revolution, emancipation, secularization, universalism.

Especially starting in 1933, for Schmitt *das Jüdische* rose to the level of a symbol of what "good German law" should combat. In 1918, the *Judenrepublik*, the "Republic of the Jews" as Schmitt disdainfully called the Weimar Republic, had put an end to the empire of Wilhelm II. The Weimar Republic was a concrete political order, based on monarchical institutions, with a "dominion of law," an abstract and rootless democracy. This is how Schmitt synthesized that political event: *die Herren der Lex unterwerfen den Rex*, "the Law lords make the King their subject."326 Protagonists of the dissolution of the old empire, the Jews were seen as the agents of democracy – that is, of an infinite debate, an inconclusive dialectic – and tireless supporters of "legality" and "equality" – empty values that should be countered with "legitimacy" and "homogeneity." Schmitt defined this concept by using the term *Artgleichheit* – that homogeneity of species – or, better, of "race" – upon which the new National Socialist Reich should be based. For Schmitt, when a group of people regains consciousness, when they "come to," the *Artfremder* – the alien to the species – no matter how hard he tries, is harmful, because he "thinks and understands differently," because "he is made [*geartet*] in a different way, and remains, in any order of essential ideas, in the existential conditions of his own species [*Art*]."327 However, this argument was even more valid for Schmitt, in that it presumes that there is an intention to deceive, a plan to infiltrate German society, to cultivate one's own interest by flaunting universal ideals: "whoever invokes humanity wants to cheat."328

But for the jurist Schmitt, the Jews were in particular the representatives of the "Law," the *Gesetz*. "There are people who, without land, without a state and without a Church, exist only in the 'law'; normative thought is the only thought that appears rational to them, while every other type of juristic thought seems, on the contrary, incomprehensible, mystical, fantastic, ridiculous."329 From the political accusation of an existence devoid of foundation, exiled and de-territorialized, there emerged

the theological accusation, hurled throughout the centuries at the Jews – the accusation of being connected to an interpretation that clung inextricably to the letter of the law, devoid of spirit; of being succubi of a completely external observance of the law, slaves of a formalistic legalism that the religion of love would later supersede. Thus, the particular character of Judaism, connected with the contested status of being the chosen people of God, frozen in an "Old" Testament that spoke of hatred and revenge, would be replaced by the "New" Testament. A key element of the theology of substitution is the Greek word *nomos*, with which the word *Torah* had been erroneously translated.330 Schmitt's *nomos* refers back to this anti-Jewish tradition; deriving from the Greek verb *némo*, it purportedly corresponds to the German *Nehmen*, a kind of taking that is a departure as well, but also an occupation, a conquest, which therefore indicates the original taking of the earth, the "appropriation."331 Besides being a juridical category, the *nomos* is the immemorial gesture that begins the history of the world, because, in its concreteness, it is a "fenceword" – *Ordnung* and *Ortung* – plunging its own roots into the *justissima tellus*, the infinitely just earth, the mother of all law.332 Therefore, *nomos* is *Recht*, law, a word that is clearly distinguished from *Gesetz*, legislation.333 There can be new subdivisions, but law must remain "of the earth." And its order is crucial.

For Schmitt, the Jews with their laws undermined the connection between the Law and the earth: not only because they bore witness to the possibility of a people who survived without the roots of a *jus terrendi*, but because the *jus scriptum* of Judaism decreed the very dissolution of the *nomos*.334 The conflict was seen by Schmitt as juridical, political, existential – and in a certain way also "biogeographic," because it was concerned with two opposite ways of life in their relationship to the earth. "The relationship between a people with a land formed by their own settlement and their own cultural labor, from which derive their concrete forms of power, is incomprehensible to the mind of the Jew."335

After registering as a member of the National Socialist party on May 1, 1933, the same day that Heidegger made his official entrance, Schmitt offered a decisive juridical-philosophical contribution to the constitution of the Third Reich, demonstrating

how the provision with which, on February 28, 1933, individual rights had been suspended, that *Ausnahmezustand* – the “state of exception” – had been declared, was nothing short of the legal process through which Germany ceased to be a commissary dictatorship and became a sovereign dictatorship. “Sovereign is he who decides on the exception” – Schmitt wrote in his *Political Theology* of 1922.336 Referring back to this principle, on August 1, 1934, Schmitt published the essay “The Führer Protects the Law,” in which he legitimized Hitler’s power, declaring that he was “the supreme judge” of the German people.337 Schmitt stressed the discontinuity of the current epoch from the preceding one. The constitution – or rather, the new constituting of the German people – was for Schmitt not a founding norm, but rather an existential decision. The *Führer*, because of his homogeneity with the German people, was the true guarantor, the very “source” of the law. If the “state of exception” was the suspension of norms, then order could not be the product of a way of acting according to those norms; rather, it originated from a political action that was supremely capable of making decisions.338 It is impossible to not perceive in the “suspension” of norms a political echo of that theological gesture by which Christianity attempted to supersede Jewish law.339 Hence, it is legitimate to ask, as Taubes did, whether “the new *nomos* of the earth can compete with the *nomos* of Christ?”340 And another question must be asked: to what point might the antinomy, long attributed to Saint Paul, really be the rejection of heteronomy, the impossibility of accepting the law of others, and the command of the Other, above all with the Other as the enemy?

In 1935, Schmitt provided a legitimization of the Nuremberg Laws in his essay “The Constitution of Freedom,” where he warned against “all Germany’s enemies and parasites,” against the “typical camouflages for foreign domination.”341 The following year, on October 3 and 4, 1936, Schmitt organized a conference of jurists of the Third Reich on the theme “Jews in Jurisprudence.”

In his concluding speech at the conference, Schmitt pointed an accusatory finger at the inauspicious “domination” of the *jüdischer Geist*, the “Jewish spirit.” Obsessed with the identification of what a Jew is, with the difficulty of defining the

essence of a Jew, Schmitt perceived the elusive, polar character of the Jews. And he projected this onto “Jewish law,” which he saw as a “redemption from chaos” that had nothing to do with German law. Thus, there arose “the strange polarity of Jewish chaos and Jewish legalism, of anarchic nihilism and positivistic normativism, of coarse sensualist materialism and abstract moralism.”[342]

But the Jew was elusive, because, living in deceit and lies, he was capable of assuming multiple disguises, to the point of making himself invisible. And it was precisely this invisibility that disturbed Schmitt – Jews were the most embedded example of assimilated “others.” How could these assimilated Jews be flushed out into the open? These were the Jews who passed themselves off as Germans, speaking the German language and often changing their names. And, above all, they were the converted Jews who, in spite of having been baptized, always remained Jews in Schmitt’s eyes. It was not by chance that Schmitt claimed for himself the figure of the Great Inquisitor as described by Dostoyevsky in the novel *The Brothers Karamazov*.[343]

For Schmitt, the Jews were deceptive because, while pretending to affirm universal values, they were really aiming at their own particular interests. With this tactic, they were bolstering modernity in a dramatic acceleration. They were pulling the strings, exerting their secret power behind the scenes of history. How to put a stop to the restless spirit of Judaism? How to stop the agents of acceleration?

In some of his most violent and refined writings, Schmitt returned to the mythical figure of the Leviathan. When, toward the end of 1937 and in the Spring of 1938, Schmitt was writing about this, it was already the time of his “inner journey,” the state of intellectual retirement toward which Jünger and Heidegger were both heading. While the heated debate on the “total state” was going on, Schmitt gave a new interpretation of the incomparable master Thomas Hobbes, still believed to be responsible for the destruction of the state, to which “Jewish authors” from Spinoza to Mendelssohn and all the way to Marx had contributed. Schmitt made a connection between the Leviathan of Hobbes and the monster described in the Book of Job (40–1). Alongside the strong, indomitable marine animal, there also appears in the Bible the Behemoth, a land animal.[344] Besides the Christian exegesis, Schmitt recalls the

"Jewish interpretations," which he attributes to rabbis, and above all to Kabbalists:

> According to such Jewish-cabalistic interpretations, the Leviathan represents "the cattle upon a thousand hills" (Psalms 50:10), namely, the heathens. World history appears as a battle among heathens. The Leviathan, symbolizing sea powers, fights the Behemoth, representing land powers. The latter tries to tear the Leviathan apart with his horns, while the Leviathan covers the Behemoth's mouth and nostrils with his fins and kills him in that way. This is, incidentally, a good depiction of the taking over of a country by means of a blockade. But the Jews stand by and watch how the people of the world kill one another. This mutual "ritual slaughter and massacre" is for them lawful and "kosher," and they therefore eat the flesh of the slaughtered peoples and are sustained by it. In other such teachings God plays for a few hours daily with the Leviathan.345

Almost as if he wanted to give proof that he was unveiling a secret, Schmitt did not fail to point out the "esoteric character" of such "Jewish interpretations," for which, however, he did not provide any source, neither here nor in his 1942 essay *Land and Sea*, where he again described the struggle throughout the history of the world between the Leviathan and the Behemoth, who tear each other apart while the Jews "celebrate the festive millennial 'Feast of the Leviathan,' which Heinrich Heine narrated in a famous poem."346 This time, Schmitt targeted the fifteenth-century philosopher and biblical commentator Isaac Abarbanel as a "Kabbalist."

But Jewish hermeneutics says nothing about this myth. In the Talmud – not in the Kabbalah – Rabbi Yochanan says that "God is destined to make a feast for the righteous from the flesh of Leviathan."347 No political meaning emerges, nor any connection with the history of peoples. The atmosphere of happy fulfillment that is breathed at the end of time also pervades the poem by Heine, as it does the Jewish hymn that inspired the poem.348

And why, finally, did Schmitt make reference to Abarbanel, who had never spoken about such a clash between the Leviathan and the Behemoth? In 1937, 500 years after his death, Abarbanel was

still remembered as an exemplary example of a philosopher and politician by the Jewish communities in Germany, where interest in the *marranos* and the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 had grown. Abarbanel, a pioneer of tolerance who had courageously fought against the Holy Office, denouncing the violence of the Inquisition, became, in Schmitt's version, a bloodthirsty Kabbalist.[349]

The scene would indicate the unique, "totally abnormal" position of the Jewish people with regard to other peoples:[350] the chosen status of Israel – looking at the history of the world from the sidelines, in order to gain an advantage at the opportune moment, to profit from that carnage, to take life from the death of others. This was Schmitt's representation – based on phantomatic "Kabbalistic" interpretations – of the theory of a Jewish plot.

Myth and history were closely intertwined by Schmitt, above all in his political theory. Thus, it was not difficult to understand that the Leviathan represented England, while the Behemoth – earthly power – was Germany, "strangled" by a naval blockade, the expression of "total war."[351]

In *Land and Sea*, returning to the myth of the Leviathan, Schmitt introduced the eschatological figure of the *katechon*, the "forestaller" who would undermine the coming of the Antichrist as prefigured by Satan's power, with deceitful portents and prodigies, with every kind of ungodly subterfuge. As Paul said in his second letter to the Thessalonians: "and now you know what is restraining [. . .] But the one who restrains is to do so only for the present."[352] The language of this mini-apocalypse, though enigmatic, does imply, according to the exegesis of the New Testament – in particular the patristic exegesis – that, as long as the *katechon* delays the arrival of the Antichrist, the Parousia – that is, the second coming of Christ – must still be awaited.

Schmitt updated the figure of the *katechon*. The age of the "State" had reached the end, and the same held true for Hobbes' Leviathan, which had been its symbol. More suitable for the new Reich was the *katechon*, the *Aufhalter*, which inscribed the Reich within the history of salvation. As Schmitt observed in *The Nomos of the Earth*, written for the most part during the war, "Here 'Reich' means – to restrain the appearance of the Antichrist

and the end of the present eon."[353] For Schmitt, the millenary Reich was a historical form of the *katechon*; even if it should someday succumb, it would not have affected the salvific power of the *katechon*.

While Schmitt spoke of the *katechon*, a power that had a defensive nature, that could restrain, repel, and slow down, after its early successes the Wehrmacht was forced, at the beginning of 1942, to repel the Soviet counteroffensive on the Eastern front. The expansionist policy of the Third Reich, legitimized by Schmitt with his *Großraumtheorie*, the "theory of greater space," had failed. But what about the agents of acceleration? Schmitt did not mention them, although it is clear who the enemy was that his *katechon* would restrain. By 1942, the agents of acceleration, arrested, deported, and interned in concentration camps, had already begun to be taken to the gas chambers.

"What, me a friend of Carl Schmitt? I am a Jew and elevated to the arch-enemy of Carl Schmitt."[354] This was the response that Taubes recalls having given to a curious interlocutor during a seminar on political theory in 1952 at Harvard, where he had gone to speak about the "apocalypse of the revolution." What did Taubes have in common with Schmitt? Very little: the experience of time, and that of history as a *Frist*, an endpoint. The idea that the time of the world is not infinite, that it is heading toward the end, is a Christian idea in that it comes from Judaism: *et ketz* – the time of the end.[355] Nevertheless, Schmitt's *katechon* proved how this Jewish "end of the world" could be "domesticated" by Christianity, and come to "an arrangement with the world and its powers":[356] "Carl Schmitt thinks apocalyptically, but from above, from the powers that be; I think from the bottom."[357]

Perhaps we should also add, to what Taubes said, that Schmitt was profoundly anti-messianic. His *katechon* was a *reactionary* power, in the literal sense, because it sought to react against the revolutionary impulse that was shaking the foundations of history; it sought to restrain history with a will to power destined to tragically become an apocalypse that knew no hope nor redemption, because it treated the Other as the eschatological limit of its own imminent disappearance; and it remained perennially chained to that enemy. Although he had proclaimed that it was

"time to keep quiet," after 1945 Schmitt spoke – but not to make excuses for himself, not to publicly ask his enemy for forgiveness. In fact, when he was interrogated at the Nuremberg Trials in 1947, he defended his positions.358 Schmitt always considered himself to have been defeated – but militarily, not spiritually. Above all, he continued to be obsessed with the Jews: "Today they feel themselves victors, and indeed they are so."359 He was certain that salvation would not come from them – rather, it would come from *captivitas*, captivity.360 On January 12, 1950, he noted: "*Salus ex Judaeis? Perditio ex Judaeis?* Now let's finish with this insistent *Judaeis*! The moment we became disunited the Jews sneaked under the table. Until we understand this, there will be no remedy. Spinoza was the first to do it."361 At that time in Germany, few traces of the Jews remained, and German Judaism was finished forever; it was a spectral presence. But Schmitt continued to feel that he was being persecuted by the Jew, his metaphysical enemy. And while he did not fail to recall the young Hegel and his pioneering opposition to legalism, he did not let down his guard against the "dominion of law." "With regard to the *katechon*" – he wrote – "[. . .] for me it represents the only possibility of understanding history as a Christian." But "who is the *katechon* of today? [. . .] The question is more important than that of the Jüngerian chief forester."362 In a note dated April 28, 1950, commenting on the book by Marcel Simon on the relations between Jews and Christians during the Roman empire, Schmitt wrote:

> After the bar Kokhba revolt was suppressed, in 135 A.D., open resistance disappeared. Only eschatological, messianic hope remained, *en veilleuse*. "The stable authority of the patriarch, recognized by Rome, replaced the ephemeral insurrectional power of the Son of the Star, and, in the Israel that had come to its senses and resigned itself, the exclusive reign of the Law had been put in place." This is what it's all about: "Le règne exclusif de la loi."363

Heidegger called into question not only Schmitt's friend–enemy dichotomy, but also his concept of "the political." Besides being relevant because it anticipated a debate that would take place much later, in the course of the twentieth century, Heidegger's criticism

of Schmitt, the last great metaphysician of politics, was decisive because of its theme of Judaism, given that it took away any basis for the absolute "enemy" with which the Jew was identified.

Although they are limited to a few pages and have an elliptical form, the passages from Heidegger's 1934 seminar on Hegel are very explicit.364 Heidegger overturned Schmitt's conception: for him, the friend–enemy relationship was not the beginning, that from which "the political" took its origin; rather, it was the opposite – it was its outcome.

> Friend-Enemy-*Relation* an essential *consequence* of the political – but not this itself.
>
> 1) In what way does one become and be an enemy?
>
> 2) In what way is one a *political* friend?365

Friend and enemy are relational terms that are constituted in the *Kampf* – the "struggle for recognition" – as Heidegger defined it in Hegelian terms: a recognition or non-recognition of "the other" in his *Anderssein* – his otherness – that can only occur based on the presupposition of the "cure" and therefore in the being-in-the-world that is always a historical being-with-others. The friend–enemy "opposition" derives its "essential origin" from the *with* of the "being the one with the other" of the *Miteinandersein* – the historical existence of the community.366 Obviously, this does not signify a negation of the concept of enemy and of friend; rather, it is a matter of bringing them back to the context from which they originated, and showing them for what they are – that is, derived, secondary concepts that are not self-founded; nor do they completely fulfill the concept of "the political."

Schmitt, instead, sought to base "the political" on the metaphysical dichotomy of friend–enemy. For that matter, Schmitt's entire position remained, according to Heidegger, within the metaphysical horizon, both on account of the way in which it looked toward the beginning and the order of the beginning, and because his perspective – also on politics – was that of the subject of modernity. Heidegger's lapidary criticism of Schmitt culminated in the harshest, most dismissive judgment: "*Carl Schmitt thinks liberally*."367

The accusation of continuing to operate within the context of liberalism determined the political distance assumed by Heidegger. But this was also a vindication of the primacy of philosophy: the new politics to which National Socialism aspired could come to be only in a conscious idea of the need to not fall back into metaphysics, which Heidegger saw as the realm of modern liberalism.

19 *Polemos* and Total War

But Heidegger's criticism broadened, and ultimately targeted politics itself. Leaving behind Schmitt, whom he no longer mentioned, Heidegger started down a difficult, rarely trodden path, which led from the state to the *polis*. It was the pathway destined to re-unite what modernity had separated – the pathway that the "National Socialist revolution" should have followed, and that Heidegger, in the Summer of 1942, traveled alone, guided by Hölderlin and following the lower course of the Danube as it flowed into the Black Sea, a sea that had been very eccentric since antiquity, when it bore the Greek name "Istros."

Heidegger's intention was to remove political categories from the conceptual context of modernity – to demolish, or rather to deconstruct, "the political," leading politics back to the place to which etymology was recalling it, to the *polis*. Already foreshadowed in his seminar on Hegel, the genealogical primacy of the *polis* over the state came to light eight years later in Heidegger's courses dedicated to Hölderlin's hymn "The Ister." "The political" was patently "that which belongs to the *polis*"; but the opposite was not true. If, armed with political categories, one attempted to expunge the *polis*, one would end up losing its meaning, because the *polis* "is not a political concept."368 Nor was it a given that the Greeks, even though they lived at the time of the *polis*, were clear about its existence. It would be erroneous to identify it with the state, or with the city, or even with the city-state. The *polis* for Heidegger was the pole around which existence itself rotated; he turned to the German language and followed its homophonic references: the *polis* was "neither merely state [*Staat*], nor merely city [*die Stätte*]"; it was "in its first instance properly 'the stead' [*die Statt*]: the site [*die Stätte*] of the

abode of human history that belongs to humans in the midst of beings."[369] In German, however, the *polis*, besides being a place, gives place – in the sense of the verb *gestatten*, that is, "to allow"; it allows humans to live in a place. If the word is Greek, then the *polis*, more than a form that was realized in the past, is the place of a community that is yet to come.

Neither an ideal constitution, nor a form of dominance, the *polis* is the place of possibilities that are yet to be imagined – possibilities that are always new and unique, in which human beings accede to being-together and cohabitation. There is no dictate or dictatorship that can rule it. Heidegger stayed well away from the instrumental conception of politics, for which he reproached Schmitt; thus, he was not interested in establishing the *arche* and the principle that gave order to the community. In another course that he taught in 1942, Heidegger observed: "we still think the Greek *polis* and the 'political' in a totally un-Greek fashion. We think the 'political' as Romans, i.e., *imperially*."[370] And, in fact, in Latin, "*Imperium* is commandment, command."[371] For Heidegger, politics could no longer be thought of as dominion and domination; this had been the error of National Socialism. This was because the *polis* could no longer be created, nor its place established; for Heidegger, the *polis*, which provided a place for humans to live in, was the place of *Ereignis*, of the event in which history unfolds.[372] In this sense, the *polis* is that which is eminently worthy of questioning, the kind of questioning and interrogating that "the political" lacks. From this comes the "totality" of the *polis*, its totalitarian character, which does not depend, "as some naive minds think, on the casual willfulness of dictators but on the metaphysical essence of modern actuality."[373]

Nevertheless, to call into question the originary friend–enemy dichotomy does not mean to negate the *polemos*, which Heidegger often translated as *Kampf* (struggle); nor does it mean to question the existence of the enemy.[374] Although *Feind* is not a key word in Heidegger's philosophical vocabulary, and occurs only rarely in his work, nevertheless it does appear in some strategic passages in his writings from the 1930s, in particular in the *Black Notebooks*.

So who was the "enemy" for Heidegger? Or perhaps one should ask what was the enemy. Or perhaps it would be more correct to take up the question from Heidegger's seminar on Hegel: "In what way does one become and be an enemy?"

Heidegger's answer was ambivalent, even mute over the course of the years from 1933 to 1941, and it evolved in a relationship with Schmitt that was not explicit, but still evident. Early on, Schmitt influenced Heidegger, and subsequently he became the target of Heidegger's criticism. Equally clear is that the enemy, understood as *hostis* – the public enemy – was the Jew, although Heidegger, unlike Schmitt, was careful not to place the identifying word *Jude* alongside the word *Feind*.

In his courses from 1933, which were published under the title *Sein und Wahrheit* (*Being and Truth*), Heidegger maintained that the enemy was anyone who was an "essential threat" to the people: "The enemy does not have to be external, and the external enemy is not even always the more dangerous one."[375] Precisely when it seemed there was no enemy, it was, according to Heidegger, indispensable "to find the enemy, to bring him to light." Above and beyond the existential exigency – that is, to avoid *Dasein* losing its edge – the political necessity emerged. And therefore Heidegger affirmed:

> The enemy can have attached itself to the innermost roots of the *Dasein* of a people and can set itself against this people's own essence and act against it. The struggle is all the fiercer and harder and tougher, for the least of it consists in coming to blows with one another; it is often far more difficult and wearisome to catch sight of the enemy as such, to bring the enemy into the open, to harbor no illusions about the enemy, to keep oneself ready for attack, to cultivate and intensify a constant readiness and to prepare the attack looking far ahead with the goal of total annihilation.[376]

The image of the internal enemy who undermines the essence of a people cannot help but recall Schmitt.[377] This leads one to think that in this sense Heidegger was slavishly following Schmitt in identifying the ontological and political enemy who was obviously the Jew.

Several years later, however, in the *Black Notebooks*, the enemy became the theme of a question that returned to an issue that had been formulated in Heidegger's seminar on Hegel – and, in fact, amended it: "Where *stands the enemy*, and how is he *formed*? In what direction the attack? With what weapons?"378 Heidegger was questioning where the front line was.379 Although he emphasized the *Kampf für das Wesen*, the "struggle over the essence" that the Germans had to fight, he countered those who, beyond immediately indicating an enemy in the adversary, made of the enemy a "devil," demonizing him, in this way eliminating not only the creativity of opposition, but making impossible the very struggle over the essence.380

It is not difficult to guess whom Heidegger was criticizing when he emphasized two dangers: "either 'the political' is altogether absolutized, or it is all too facilely incorporated into an apparently renewed Christianity."381 But his criticism became even stronger when he took aim at the "political Catholicism" that had been replaced by "Catholic politics," that is – etymologically tracing "Catholic" back to *kathólou* (altogether) – that politics which, because of its veilleity to dominate, can be called "total." As Schmitt had used an adjective as a noun – "the political" – so Heidegger spoke sarcastically about "the Catholic," the essence of which did not reside in Christianity. It "acquired its genuine form for the first time in *Jesuitism* [. . .] for the glorification of volition and of the orderliness of what is soldierly within Catholicism, for the basic comportment of the counter," beginning with the Counter-Reformation. "'Catholicism' in this essential sense is in its historical provenance Roman – Spanish – ; utterly un-Nordic and completely un-German."382 If Schmitt would reproach him for an a-theological and de-theologized eschatology, Heidegger in turn denounced the Catholic dogmatism of the enemy.

> Every dogmatism, whether ecclesiastical-political or civilpolitical, necessarily maintains that any thinking or acting that apparently or actually deviates from the dogma is an acquiescence to something *inimical* to that dogma – whether the enemies are the pagans and the Godless or the Jews and communists. In this way of thinking lies a peculiar strength – not the strength of thinking – but that of the enforcement of the promulgated dogma.383

And while war became total, Heidegger increasingly looked toward the *polemos*. What then was the difference between war and struggle, between *Krieg* and *Kampf*, and what was the distance between Heidegger and Schmitt? As the *polemos* had begun the opposition between the two philosophers, so it also concluded it. Heidegger reversed the relationship – for him, the *polemos* was the presupposition for the enemy, not vice versa.[384] For Schmitt, hostilities – of which war was the extreme realization – began with the enemy, who permeated and enabled "the political." If Clausewitz had said that "war is simply a continuation of political intercourse, with the addition of other means," Schmitt maintained that war was "the presupposition of politics."[385] In this way, a continuity was delineated among enemy–struggle–war that constituted the political axis of Schmitt's thinking.

For Heidegger, in contrast, there was a discontinuity between struggle and war. In his view, in fact, where war was imposed, and the adversary rose to the level of an enemy, the *polemos* became rigid and lost its onto-historical depth. Thus, Heidegger did not share the way that Schmitt saw war. And since *Feind*, enemy, was not a key word in Heidegger's vocabulary, neither was *Krieg*, war. But this did not prevent Heidegger from reflecting on the ultimate form assumed by war when, toward the end of the 1930s, Germany was already moving via forced marches toward catastrophe.

> War is not, as Clausewitz still thinks, the continuation of politics by other means. If "war" signifies "total war," i.e., the one deriving from the unfettered machination of beings as such, then it becomes a *transformation* of "politics" and a *revelation* of the fact that "politics" itself has become merely the executor of unmastered metaphysical decisions, an executor that is no longer in control of itself. Such war does not continue something already present-at-hand; on the contrary, it forces the implementation of essential decisions, ones of which it itself is not the master. Therefore such war no longer admits of "victors" and "vanquished"; all become the slaves of the history of beyng.[386]

For Heidegger, war revealed the submission of politics to power; it made its instrumental use come to the surface. The "total" nature of war derived from the abandonment of Being. There was no longer any difference between war and peace – except when peace was confused with a temporary armistice. Since war had become the world, and the world had become war, there was no more place for peace.[387] But there was also no more space for the enemy – and perhaps for the friend – and for all of those distinctions that Schmitt obstinately preserved.[388]

If there was no longer any opposition between war and peace, then did there remain an opposition, a way out of the "totality" of war? In a schema that Heidegger proposed in the *Black Notebooks*, while war and peace slipped into the middle, at either end were located the *polemos* on the one side and decision on the other.[389]

On several occasions, already as early as *Being and Time*, Heidegger returned to the *polemos*, which he usually translated as *Kampf* (struggle), but also as *Streit* (strife), and as *Auseinandersetzung* (confrontation). To understand the meaning of *Kampf*, this key term in Heidegger's philosophical vocabulary, it is necessary to consider Heraclitus' Fragment 53, which was the framework within which Heidegger thought of it: "War is both father and king of all; some he has shown forth as gods and others as men, some he has made slaves and others free." For Heidegger, dissent did not dissociate; conflict maintained and gathered together – it was a gathering. Hence the nexus between *polemos* and *logos*.[390] If the *polemos* was a murky concept in Schmitt's thinking, in Heidegger it was clear that the *polemos* was not armed. It had to do with questioning and therefore with the erotic contention of philosophers. But its meaning is broad, and it pervades the community: "Each community carries with itself, in its ear, the voice of the adversary, a sort of interior resistance."[391] The enemy becomes an adversary again, the adversary recedes almost as if recalled by conscience, the voice of the other that speaks within itself. Heidegger's rejection of Schmitt is "irreducible," Derrida emphasizes[392] – because, in effect, Schmitt related the *polemos* to the discourse on war. Not so Heidegger, who did not forget the words of Heraclitus: *polemos* is *pater*, father, progenitor, and is *panton basileus*, the "king of all"; but

basileus, which does not simply mean "king," is the custodian, the *waltender Bewahrer*, the dominant preserver who lets Being be in the *Aus-ein-ander-setzung*, in that confrontation that is an unfolding of one thanks to the other. The *polemos* is the preserver that rules and, by ruling, preserves Being.393

For Heidegger, the "spiritual struggle" had nothing to do with *Sieg*, victory.394 There are combatants, *Kämpfer*, who always need an adversary – indeed, an enemy. "If there is none, they invent one," because otherwise they would seem to have no goal. Thus, they always fight *for* the enemy, making themselves dependent upon him. But there are other combatants who fight for their own goals and whose supreme battle – the battle for essential decisions – is not over "possessions and results, and not over power and enjoyment," but rather over "a beginning of the history of Being."395

> To be the victor – does not simply mean to emerge from battle as the superior, for thereby the victor can indeed have become the inferior, by subscribing exclusively to the goal and strategy of the enemy and pursuing these to an ever higher degree in the future. To be the victor means to set the authentic and highest goal for the battle.396

These are not the words of a pacifist, which Heidegger never was. When he wrote these words in 1940, he had no more illusions about a planetary war. He sought to distinguish *Kampf* from *Krieg*, to be the preserver, to preserve not the king who had decided upon the exception, but rather the king who let everything be, and who reigned by preserving Being.

20 *Weltjudentum*: The Jewish World Conspiracy

The enemy that the Nazis were combatting in their totalizing image was the Jew. In the moments of greatest intensity, the enemy became *Judah*, and, in an ugly hyperbole, *Alljuda* (Universal Judah). The "malediction of the superlative" characterized the *Lingua Tertii Imperii* and found expression particularly in compound terms that contained the prefix *Welt* (world).397 Just as every speech by Hitler was preceded by the title "The World Listens to the Führer," so every event that had to

do with the Third Reich had worldwide relevance; indeed, it was inscribed upon the history of the world, deciding its course: it was *weltgeschichtlich*. In this sense, both the Jews and the Bolsheviks were world enemies in a planetary war.

In the last part of the *Black Notebooks* – *Ponderings XIII* and *XIV* – in pages dating from 1940 and 1941 that reflect the climate of war, Heidegger spoke explicitly about *internationales Judentum* (international Judaism) and especially *Weltjudentum* (world Judaism).398 As also emerges from the context, these terms are not at all neutral; on the contrary, they have clearly negative connotations, and are accusatory.399 For a philosopher like Heidegger, always careful to avoid any instrumental use of language, the recurrence of the term *Weltjudentum* cannot be accidental. So what does it mean to speak of "world Judaism"? To what does this term refer?

To speak of *Weltjudentum* means to share, support, and spread the myth of a worldwide Jewish conspiracy. This responds to evidence provided by Jaspers, which (until Heidegger started using the term) had seemed to be rather surprising. Recalling a conversation that he had with Heidegger in Heidelberg in May of 1933, Jaspers noted: "I spoke of the Jewish question, of the wicked nonsense about the Elders of Zion, to which he replied: 'But there is a dangerous international alliance of Jews.'"400

What is the myth of the Jewish conspiracy to dominate the world? Why was it at its height precisely during that time? How was this myth constructed? What was the "original" scene of the conspiracy?

It is night-time in the Jewish cemetery in Prague. A young student from Berlin, with unmistakably German features and a spiritual, determined look about him, meets a certain Lasali, a shady-looking Italian Jew, baptized and unscrupulous, who is ready to reveal the "secret" of the Jews – to introduce the young German to the Kabbalah, the Jewish conspiracy against the whole world. In the mysterious, chilling darkness, they hear the gates of the cemetery creak. Shadowy figures wrapped in long cloaks stealthily pass by. They are the representatives of the twelve tribes of Israel, who meet every 100 years to report on the progress of their conspiracy to take over the world. It is a great Sanhedrin, in which

a thirteenth tribe – the tribe of the exiles – participates. Presiding over the assembly is Aaron, who represents the Levites. For every tribe, there resounds the name of a European metropolis – it is the sign of Jewish power. Each one presents a report on the last 100 years and proposes a particular form of machination: to play the market; to get nations into debt; to acquire landed property; to transform craftsmen into industrial workers; to destroy churches; to weaken armies; to foment revolution; to monopolize commerce; to infiltrate public offices; to create a hegemony of culture; to encourage mixed marriages; to subvert morality. The last to come is Manasse, who says that nothing of this is of any use without the press, which transforms injustice into justice and humiliation into honor; breaks up families; and topples thrones. Aaron concludes by recalling how the world should belong to the people of Abraham, who have been scattered all over it; the time has never been so near – because gold means world domination. This is the secret of the Kabbalah. In the millenary struggle of Israel, finally the new century will be the century of victory.

This is the "original" scene of the Jewish conspiracy; it sprang from the pen of an unexceptional employee of the Prussian postal service, Hermann Ottomar Friedrich Gödsche, who in 1868 published the mediocre novel *Biarritz*, which included a chapter entitled "At the Cemetery in Prague." The novel's success was assured, and the fantastic tale soon passed for a forged document. Then, in 1881, the French periodical *Contemporain* published "The Rabbi's Discourse," a re-telling of that sinister assembly in the Jewish cemetery in Prague, which – it was guaranteed – had actually taken place.

But this was not yet the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, for which Gödsche had provided the literary model. So, who wrote the *Protocols*? When, and where? Norman Cohn has attempted to uncover the extremely intricate plot that produced the myth of the Jewish conspiracy.[401] But the story – far from being finished – does not really have a beginning, because the presumed original does not exist.[402] Nor is it known who the author was. For that matter, the effects that the text had are much more important than its origins.

The text of the *Protocols* was fabricated in Paris during the early

twentieth century, on orders from the secret service of the Tzar, the infamous *okhrana*, the foreign section of which was then under the direction of Pyotr Ivanovich Rachkovsky. Rachkovsky asked a friend of his, Matvei Golovinski, a skilled forger, to manipulate and expand upon existing texts: the pamphlet by Maurice Joly *The Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu*, written against Napoleon III in 1864, and Gödsche's novel *Biarritz*. The eminently political intention was to make public the text of the purported secret sessions held by the leaders of "world Judaism," in order to reveal their plan to conquer the world and to put on guard not only the Russian government, but all of international opinion. During their Rocambolesque vicissitudes, the *Protocols*, consisting of a palimpsest of about 100 pages subdivided into twenty-four chapters, re-appeared in 1905 as an appendix to the volume *The Great within the Small and the Antichrist, an Imminent Political Possibility* by the Russian mystic Sergei Nilus, who, in an apocalyptic vision, adapted the figure of the Antichrist to the idea of a conspiracy.403 In this way, anti-Semitic mobilization used the symbolic archive of anti-Jewish Christian texts to strengthen the conspiracy theory and to give the secular version an aura of mystery, raising the effigy of an absolute enemy.

Theological and political motifs were mingled in the "sages of Zion," fictitious figures in which were blended the ancient wise men of Israel, who purportedly had been preparing a plot against humanity since the time of Solomon; Zionist leaders, beginning with Theodor Herzl; and the unknown puppeteers who pulled the strings of the conspiracy. Thus, Zionism became known as a catalyst, understood "as a strategic plan to conquer the world and subject it to the yoke of Israel."404 In fact, the diffusion of the *Protocols* coincided with the time of the first Zionist congress, the one held in Basel in 1897, all the way to the sixth congress, held in August 1903. And it is not by chance that the *völkisch* ideologue Theodor Fritsch published in 1924 his version of the fake protocols under the title *Die zionistischen Protokollen*.

But the "Jewish peril" was above all the "red peril." From 1903 until the October Revolution in 1917, the *Protocols* constituted a powerful ideological weapon in the hands of those who wanted to

block any attempt at reform, in which they saw a maneuver of the Jewish conspiracy and a step toward Jewification.

Translated and published, with new prefaces and epilogues, with titles and subtitles always intended to orient their message, the *Protocols* traveled through the capitals of Europe and arrived in Germany where, in 1920, they were published in a version edited by Gottfried zur Beek, alias Ludwig Müller, with the emblematic title *Die Geheimnisse der Weisen von Zion* (*The Secrets of the Sages of Zion*). Their resonance was enormous; in a single year, the publishing house Auf Vorposten succeeded in selling more than 120,000 copies.[405] Subsequently, when the Nazis rose to power, the *Protocols*, by a decree made on October 13, 1934, became required reading in German schools.

Initially, the fiction of a conspiracy being planned by world Judaism served as a convenient explanation for the disastrous outcome of the First World War and the crisis in Germany. In no other part of the world was the message of the *Protocols* "welcomed with such avidity as in the Germany of the Weimar Republic."[406] The ideologues of Nazism, from Eckhart to Rosenberg, used the *Protocols* not only to bolster the thesis of the "state within the state," but also to validate the representation of an invisible enemy who was all the more dangerous because, in his uniqueness, he was able to assume different appearances, even opposing ones: from the banker involved in financial affairs to the communist revolutionary. But the Jew was the great threat that loomed over the world because the "Jewish spirit" had found its new avatar in Bolshevism. Within the framework of German culture, which was so strongly anchored in tradition, it was easy for the accusation of an age-old conspiracy to take hold – a conspiracy that was now about to take place, the "Jewish–Bolshevik plot." Thus, this unusual syntagma, already introduced by Rosenberg in 1923 with his book *Die Protokollen der Weisen von Zion und die jüdische Weltpolitik* (*The Protocols of the Sages of Zion and Jewish World Policy*) became Judeo-Bolshevism, the magical formula denoting the enemies of Germany who, unmasked and driven out of hiding, would demand a purifying destruction though a multiform struggle.[407]

Believing in the conspiracy meant accepting a superficial, almost

magical vision of history in which, along with a clear division between good and evil, everything could be linked back to a single cause that acted intentionally, with a subjective, persevering will.408 The more complex the historical scenario appeared, the more intense became the desire to find an ultimate explanation – but not necessarily a logical or rational explanation – hence the analogy with mythical thinking. The efficacy of a myth lies not in its veracity, but rather in the exigencies to which it responds, in the emotions that it elicits, in the suggestions that it feeds. In this sense, it is misleading to speak of a forgery, because there was no real or original story of the Sages of Zion. Myths do not negate, they limit themselves to stating; they embody the performative power of fiction. In fact, there was no point in proving that the *Protocols* were plagiarized – as, for that matter, Hitler was happy to point out.409

But, in the conspiracy myth, which was inaugurated during the time of secular modernity, political categories were the translation of a religious background that continued to persist, and without which understanding of the phenomenon would remain superficial. It was again the notion of the Jews as the chosen people of God, denounced as intolerable arrogance, that was the target. And along with the idea of the Jews as the chosen people was the mythical, secret power of the Jews, contained in the promise of world domination. It didn't matter if a Jew lived like a pauper in an isolated village in Galicia; by definition, in his essence, he belonged to international Jewry and, as such, he was powerful and to be feared. At play here was the arcane in Judaism – the idea that the Jews possess a secret that they do not reveal and that constitutes their power. For that matter, the Jews' power was perceived as being based on secrecy. In this view, the Jews' secret was the secret of all secrets – hence the accusation that they were liars, and the related accusation of machination and conspiracy.

Jealousy and admiration were at work in the imaginations of the enemies of the Jews. As Freud explained, "The [. . .] wish-phantasy relinquished long ago by the Jewish people still survives among their enemies in their belief in the conspiracy of the 'Elders of Zion.'"410 Hannah Arendt expressed herself in a similar way, adding to these motives the mimetic impulse of the Nazis: "The delusion of an already existing Jewish world domination formed

the basis for the illusion of future German world domination."[411] The Nazis' goal was to create a secret organization, similar in every way to the organization that the anti-Semitic phantasmagoria of the *Protocols* attributed to the Jews. Hitler and his minions modeled themselves on the imaginary elders of Zion.[412] Their secret organization was the SS, whose task it was to annihilate the Jews in an apocalyptic war that was supposed to protect the world from their unstoppable power.[413]

The prophecy of the Antichrist, the eschatological enemy whom the influential French anti-Semite Gougenot des Mousseaux, author of the work *Le juif, le judaïsme et la judaïsation des peuples chrétiens*, published in 1869, identified as the sovereign of the Kabbalistic Jews who were about to take over the world, resounded unmistakably, albeit in a secularized form, in the sacred texts of the Nazi doctrinaires. But this apocalyptic vision could not be understood unless seen in its anti-messianic aspiration – because not only did it take up again the reproach usually aimed at the Jews of not having recognized Jesus as the Messiah, re-launching the accusation of a literal faithfulness to the Law; above all, it was aimed at the Jewish conception, decisively earthbound and strongly political, of messianism.

This anti-messianic apocalyptic vision is also found throughout the pages of Heidegger, who seemed to share the conception of history underlying the *Protocols*, given that he alluded several times to those *Mächte*, the "powers" that supported the threads of "machination" and that did not seem compatible with a real conflict. For Heidegger, there was nothing authentic about those powers – they unleashed themselves by means of subterfuge and deceit. "[The treaty of] Versailles was a protoform."[414] From that time there operated a "gigantic concealment" whose only aim was to repeat itself in order to hide an equally gigantic void.[415] In this accomplishment that was never accomplished, and that appeared to be endless, the great orchestrator, if on the one hand it did not disdain to descend to the *Überrumpelung* (a surprise attack from the rear), on the other hand it raised itself up to a meta-historical level from which it could direct the course of events and even make use of opposing forces, playing them off one against the other. This great orchestrator was *internationales Judentum,*

“international Judaism.”[416] Warlike imperialism and humanitarian pacifism, both resulting from metaphysics, and differing only in their ontic-historical aspect, were manipulated by Jewish machination. Here history was approaching the boundary of the “prospective decision between *nothingness and beyng*.”[417]

Like Schmitt, Heidegger insisted upon the invisibility of the “powers” that only occasionally betrayed their game; otherwise, they remained *unkenntlick*, “unknown.”[418] If they were therefore inaccessible, hidden behind the scenes, then they were also impregnable. They did not need to wage war in the open; assuming different, at some times opposite, disguises, leveraging the most recondite pretexts, they were able to cause uprisings, incite the populace, make wars break out.[419] They didn’t even have to raise armies. On the model of the *Protocols*, Heidegger wrote in 1941:

> World-Judaism, incited by the emigrants allowed out of Germany, cannot be held fast anywhere and, with all its developed power, does not need to participate anywhere in the activities of war, whereas all that remains to us is the sacrifice of the best blood of the best of our own people.[420]

21 Judeo-Bolshevism

Already, in a page of *Contributions to Philosophy*, Heidegger had introduced the theme of Bolshevism, which he took up again in the *History of Beyng* and developed further in the *Black Notebooks*. His intention was, above all, to separate the phenomenon of Bolshevism from the political and cultural tradition of Russia, in order to reveal its provenance and future somewhere else:

> Bolshevism is originally Western, a European possibility; the rise of the masses, industry, technology, the dying out of Christianity; insofar, however, as the supremacy of reason, qua equalization of everyone, is merely a consequence of Christianity, which is itself basically of Jewish origin (cf. Nietzsche’s idea of the slave revolt in morals), Bolshevism is in fact Jewish; but then Christianity is also basically Bolshevist![421]

It is not surprising that, in this context, in which he was criticizing modernity, Heidegger went back to Nietzsche and to his famous coming to terms not only with the "slave revolt in morals" but also with the resentment that would continue to permeate both Judaism and Christianity.422 What is surprising is that Heidegger declared that Bolshevism is "Jewish." So, what did Heidegger mean by Bolshevism?

The genealogy of the formula "Judeo-Bolshevism" goes back to Germany in the period immediately after World War I and the Weimar Republic. From there it spread everywhere, not only in Europe but also in the United States, by means of the paths opened by the myth of a Jewish conspiracy to take over the world. The October Revolution in Russia was decisive: the Bolsheviks, who had taken power in that immense country, came from the Jewish intelligentsia. They themselves considered that event to be the first step toward a worldwide revolution.

On the one hand, Bolshevism seemed to confirm the conspiracy theory; on the other, it seemed to be explainable within a conspiracy-based conception of history: the Jews were girding their loins to derail society, to subvert the constituted order, to impose their dominion everywhere. What was that worldwide revolution if not a Bolshevization, or, better yet, a Jewification, of the world?

In no other country was the impact of the Bolshevik revolution as disruptive as it was in Germany. The hopes, hatred, and fear of a divided populace crystalized around the great political divide that would run through the history of future decades, in a clash that would become epochal. The winds of revolution arrived in 1919, first in Berlin. The Spartacists rose up, and the city followed them; revolts broke out everywhere. It would not have been difficult to get the better of the Social Democratic party led by Friedrich Ebert, which was, however, defended by units of volunteers from the army that had been disbanded after the First World War. Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were arrested on January 15 and brutally executed.

The leaders of the Spartacists of Berlin were Jews: besides Rosa Luxemburg, there were Leo Jogiches and Paul Levi. But even more striking was the preeminence of Jews in the Socialist

Republic, presided over by Kurt Eisner, who, on November 7, 1918, had put an end to the secular dynasty of the monarchs of Bavaria. After Eisner was assassinated by an extreme right-wing sympathizer, in a vortex of chaotic events, on April 6, the eve of Passover, the Bavarian Council Republic was proclaimed. The most influential leaders of this republic were Jews: Erich Mühsam, Ernst Toller, Frida Rubiner, Towia Axebrod, Gustav Landauer, Ernst Niekisch.[423] Also a Jew was Eugen Leviné, the leader of the Spartacists, the group that succeeded the anarchists. The revolution was suffocated in the blood of the army, with the assistance of nationalist paramilitary troops, the Freikorps, who, coming from Garmisch and the Bavarian mountains, descended into the streets of Munich brandishing flags emblazoned with swastikas.

It was no mystery that the Jews were connected to the revolutionary left.[424] They were men and women, recently emancipated, who felt that it was their duty to fight against every form of discrimination. Whether they were Bundists, Spartacists, anarchists, or Zionists, they brought the message of equality, the idea of socialism, the hope for a redeemed humanity. Even those among them – and they were the majority – who had distanced themselves from the faith of their fathers retained the echo of the prophets whom they themselves had ceased to recognize, and continued to tread the paths of Jewish messianism.

Their names resounded like a threat. In order to be unmasked, they were read *sub specie judaeorum*: Trotsky-Bronstein, Litvinov-Finkelstein, Wolodarsky-Cohen, Kamenev-Rozenfeld, Zinoviev-Apfelbaum. This was seen as the incontrovertible proof of a revolution that threatened nations, putting all of civilization at risk. And it was not only the right that was shouting about a conspiracy; even liberals were sounding the alarm. Thomas Mann denounced the unleashing of a "war of annihilation against Germany."[425] While exasperation with the "Bolshevik Jews" was mounting, with a glance backward the red thread that went from Moscow at least as far as the Paris Commune was sought. Spengler went well beyond this when he observed that "the original breath of the apocalypse against ancient culture, something of the dark resentment of the time of the Maccabees and beyond, much later, of that revolt that brought about the destruction of Jerusalem, all

this is certainly the basis of every form of Bolshevism."426

It was Dietrich Eckart who theorized Judeo-Bolshevism in a pamphlet published posthumously in 1924, bearing this significant title: *Der Bolschwismus von Moses bis Lenin: Zwiedgespräch zwischen Adolf Hitler und mir* (*Bolshevism from Moses to Lenin: A Dialogue Between Adolph Hitler and Me*).427 According to Eckart's bizarre, disturbing interpretation, already at the time of Moses the Jews were playing the Egyptians off against one another by spreading propaganda about liberty, equality, and fraternity – a strategic paradigm that would be repeated again and again.428 In that paradigm, Bolshevism became identified with the destructive action carried out by the Jews over the course of time; it was traced from Trotsky to Marx, all the way back to Paul of Tarsus – Saul – Schaul – the true initiator of Bolshevism.429 In extremely violent pages, Eckart asserted that for the Jews the Messiah was "the prince of this world," who, upon closer consideration, prefigured not only world domination but indeed the end of the world.430 This vision of an end of the world caused by the Jews recurs in *Mein Kampf*: "If, with the help of the Marxian creed, the Jew conquers the nations of this world, his crown will become the funeral wreath of humanity, and once again this planet, empty of mankind, will move through the ether as it did thousands of years ago."431

The reading of the October Revolution against the backdrop of the Apocalypse of Saint John; the demonic representation of the Jew, depicted at one and the same time as the subhuman vehicle of disintegration and the superhuman force of perdition, capable of riding roughshod over history, the deicidal violence of whom had its source in the laughter of Satan – this depiction also appeared in earlier works by Eckart, who, in a de-historicized alternative, had written in 1919: "the time for decision has arrived: *between being and appearance, between Germanism and Judaism, between all and nothing*."432 An analogous tone resounded in a satire containing thirty-one caricatures of Bolshevist revolutionaries, published with an introduction by Rosenberg, where it was emphasized that Bolshevism was not an end, but rather "a means to uproot that which is firmly rooted, to corrupt populations, to de-nationalize."433 And the ultimate

judgment that awaited the Jews for this was presaged.

On January 30, 1939, in the annual commemoration of his rise to power, Hitler gave a speech in front of the Reichstag:

> Today I want once again to be a prophet: if international Jewish finance, inside and outside of Europe, should succeed in dragging the people again into a world war, the result will not be the Bolshevization of the world and the victory of Judaism, but the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe.434

Preparations in Germany for waging war against the Soviet Union had been at a fever pitch for some time, and the Final Solution was imminent. But already, twenty years before, Hitler was convinced that with the October Revolution international Judaism had undermined the German ruling class and had assumed dominion of the working masses, who were absolutely passive; in the war that was to come, it would be necessary to restore the order of the past.435

Hitler returned several times to his "prophecy": "My prophecy will come true . . ."; "I am very careful not to make rash prophecies"; "at that time the Jews, also the German Jews, laughed about my prophecy; I don't know if they are still laughing today"; "people laughed about my prophecies; a good number of those who laughed then, are no longer laughing today." The hermeneutics of Hitler's speeches are riddled with many obscure, enigmatic passages. But this at least can be said: he who can put into effect what he predicts is not a prophet; rather, Hitler's style belongs to the apocalyptic schema in which the theme of the "Jewish war" re-emerges. The prophetic tone in Hitler's speeches was, however, related to the content of his message: he was announcing that, whoever turned out to be the victor, the Jews would be the ones to succumb. Thus, in the metaphysical space of the conflict between good and evil, a cosmic event was decreed: the end of the reign of the Jews. And to the apocalypse was added resentment: confident in their power, the Jews laughed disdainfully, with the same laughter that a long Christian tradition attributed to the Devil.436 In this sadistic portrayal, where power would change camps, the Jews would choke on their own laughter.

The Germans prepared for their campaign against Russia in a

climate of exultant confidence. On the afternoon of June 15, 1941, Hitler convoked Goebbels. "The attack on Russia will begin as soon as all our troops are in position. [. . .] We face victories unequalled in human history," Goebbels noted. And he added: "There will be no restoration of Czarism in Russia, but a true socialism will replace Jewish Bolshevism."437

After the defeat of France and the refusal of England to accept the "peace" that was offered, Hitler evaluated the strategic impact of an attack toward the East. The prevailing motive was his hatred for Judeo-Bolshevism. The pact with Stalin's Russia having been broken, the beginning of the war, set for May 15, was postponed until June 22, 1941. Plans to exterminate the Jews were made; the Bolsheviks were to be exterminated as well.438 For Hitler, the destruction of the Soviet empire was part and parcel of the annihilation of Jewish power. He changed the code name for the invasion from Fritz to Barbarossa; the new name betrayed the semi-mythical character of the undertaking. The Hohenstaufen emperor Frederick Barbarossa, who had embarked on a crusade against the infidels in the Orient, was the secret redeemer who, having fallen asleep in the Kyffhäuser Mountains in Thuringia, would re-awaken to save his people during one of the most tragic periods in German history.

In a passage at the end of *Ponderings XIV* in the *Black Notebooks*, one of the few that bears a date – 1941 – Heidegger wrote: "*The outbreak of war against Bolshevism*."439 The Germans who were worried about the Jews' excessively close ties with Russia – he went on – would feel relieved. And without mentioning Hitler, Heidegger referred to the speech that Hitler gave in 1941, well known to public opinion: "Only a later age will be able to appreciate correctly the 'document' that received global publicity on the morning of June 22, 1941."440 There is no doubt which side Heidegger was on. All the more so since he often used the pronoun "we." If he was also critical toward some aspects of National Socialism, he did not on that account cease to identify with the Third Reich and to approve its expansion toward the East. For that matter, for Heidegger as for Hitler, the invasion of Russia was the war of Germany against Bolshevism. This is confirmed in the passage that immediately follows:

> The "underhandedness" of Bolshevist politics is coming to light. The Jew Litvinov has reappeared, and for his sixtieth birthday, the editor in chief of Moscow's *Izvestia*, the famous communist Radek, wrote the following: "Litvinov had demonstrated he understands, in the Bolshevist way, even if only for the time being, the need to seek confederates precisely where they may be found."441

The "confederates" to whom Heidegger was referring here were the *Bundesgenossen*. The German word *Bund*, if on the one hand it evokes the federation of Jewish workers (Algemeyner Yidisher Arbeter Bund in Yiddish) founded in Vilnius in 1897 (later this federation joined with the Bolshevik party), on the other hand it is usually used to translate the Hebrew *berit* – that is, the alliance of God with the Jewish people.

The Russian revolutionary Maxim Maxsimovich Litvinov played a major role in Soviet diplomacy in the 1930s. His successes in this context were attributed to his capacity to enter into seemingly transverse pacts, the "underhandedness" that Heidegger indicated between quotation marks, his *Hinterhältigkeit*, that ability – according to Heidegger, typical of both Jews and Bolsheviks – to dissimulate, to act insidiously and ambush people, to operate behind the scenes. He was purportedly recognized by another communist, the Pole Karl Radek – whose Jewish name was Karol Sobelsohn.442 The accusation of camouflage and deception returned. And this passage from the *Black Notebooks* does not seem far from a similar passage in Eckart's satire *Totengräber Russlands*, where there appears a caricature of Radek, among others: "K. Radek=Sobelsohn. Infamous Soviet agent . . . "443

So what was Bolshevism for Heidegger? He devoted pages of his works to political and philosophical reflections on communism – pages published more recently, dating but from the 1930s. These reveal a very original perspective, developed above all in the *Black Notebooks*, where Heidegger distinguished between communism in its effective historical realization – and there are numerous references to Lenin and to the Russian revolution – and the kind of "communism" that can be reduced neither to the name of a political regime nor to a form of economic organization. Communism for Heidegger was inscribed within the history of

Being; therefore, it should be thought of philosophically. In this sense, both Marx and Lenin were philosophers who philosophized about communism, as were Nietzsche and Jünger. To explore the complexity of this concept, Heidegger chose the path of etymology, which led him to "community," "commune," and to the Greek concept of *koinón*, that being-in-common in which the ontology of communism could come to light.444 If communism had to disappear from the political scene, there would still remain the possibility of it in the history of the West.

For Heiedegger, Bolshevism was a realization of communism. Distinguished by a particular *Gott-losigkeit*, an atheistic character, Bolshevism was connected to Judaism and considered in the final end to be a secularized form of Messianism.445 Heidegger wrote that Bolshevism "has nothing to do with Asia and even less to do with the Slavicality of the Russians – or therefore with the basic essence of what is Aryan"; otherwise, Russian spirituality, which in spite of everything Heidegger saw as being very close to German spirituality, would not be grasped. Rather, for Heidegger, Bolshevism arose "from Western-further westward [*abenländisch-westlich*], modern, rational metaphysics."446 Understood as "despotic-proletarian Soviet power," for Heidegger Bolshevism was neither "Asiatic" nor Russian; rather, it was part of modernity.447 It was a form of despotic socialism. But then wouldn't it be contiguous with Nazism, which is denoted by the combined name "National Socialism"? For Heidegger, the political difference between Bolshevism and Nazism – plain for all to see – should not fail to take into consideration the contiguity between the two movements: "Bolshevism and authoritarian socialism are metaphysically the same";448 "The term 'socialism' designates only in appearance a socialism sympathetic to 'people' in the sense of social solicitude; instead, it refers to the political-military-economic organization of the masses. "449 For Heidegger, therefore, the metaphysics of socialism should be recognized in the dominance of beings, and the abandonment of Being.

The danger that loomed was not, therefore, the "'Bolshevizing' of Europe," but the inexorable repetition of the *Vollendung* that does not reach an end, and thus covers the possibilities of Being.450 This was the great risk of expansion toward the East, if Germany could not succeed in uniting itself with Russia, thus revealing

hidden possibilities: "*Russia* is not Asia or Asiatic and yet belongs just as little to Europe."451 Russia was waiting to liberate itself from Bolshevism. Heidegger thus perceived the prospects that would reveal themselves in war – a war not against the Russians, but against the Bolsheviks – indicated as a "confrontation," an *Auseinandersetzung* which, saving the adversary "in the highest possibility of his essence," could have an onto-historical value.452

The obstacle that remained was Bolshevism – which for Heidegger was another way of saying world Judaism. This would explain why "the Anglo-American 'world' and 'Bolshevism,' in spite of the contrast between capitalism and anti-capitalism, belong to one another"; it was by way of "rationality," of which they were the result, and also by way of metaphysics and machination.453 Once again, a planetary conflict loomed, a conflict that would go beyond the geopolitical boundaries of nations, a meta-historical and metaphysical conflict – the *bellum judaicum*:

> Why are we recognizing so late that England in truth is, and can be, *without* the Western outlook? It is because we will only henceforth grasp that England started to institute the *modern* world, but that modernity in its essence is directed toward the unleashing of the machination of the entire globe. Even the thought of an agreement with England, in the sense of a division of the imperialistic "franchises," does not touch the essence of the historical process which England is now playing out to the end within Americanism and Bolshevism and thus at the same time within world-Judaism.454

22 *Weltlos* – Without World: The Jew and the Stone

Heidegger spoke explicitly about the *Weltlosigkeit des Judentums*, the "worldlessness of Judaism."455 Is this a statement, an accusation, or a condemnation?

At first glance, *Weltlosigkeit* could seem to be a condensation of the experience of the diaspora – the Jewish condition of wandering, the absence of one's own land, one's own background and foundation, roots in the air, the impossibility of becoming one with the earth, constitutive expropriation, exile even in language, lack of a homeland, separation as a form of existence, heteronomy,

not being at home, irreducible extraneousness.456

All this had already been a theme for reflection in the past, above all in German philosophy from Kant to Hegel.457 For that matter, many of these arguments could be turned upside-down; Jewish philosophy of the early twentieth century had already begun to do just that.

In a famous passage in *The Star of Redemption*, the swan song of German Judaism, Franz Rosenzweig revindicated the saga of the "eternal people" that, unlike the stories of other peoples, begins "otherwise than with indigenousness"; Abraham "migrated," and his story began "as the Holy Books recount it, with the divine commandment to go out of the land of his birth and go into a land that God would show him." Exile was not the city of nothingness – it was the dwelling place of Israel. "And the people becomes the people [. . .] in an exile."458

But the *Weltlosigkeit*, the "absence of a world" about which Heidegger spoke, does not seem reducible to *Bodenlosigkeit*, "absence of land," a condition that, in the final end, could be extended to include anyone in modernity – so much so that the absence of a world seems connected by a paradoxical link to world Judaism: *Weltlosigkeit* and *Weltjudentum*. How to explain the apparently opposite meaning of the prefix *Welt-*? In what sense could Judaism, whose absence of a world is emphasized, be worldwide?

And yet the answer is not difficult. For Heidegger it was precisely rootlessness – that ontological condition that is also political, by which the Jews, without ties and without connections, had spread all over the surface of the planet, in a transverse movement with regard to nations, remaining foreigners and unassimilated, determining the possibility of maintaining relationships that go beyond international boundaries – it was the Jews' rootlessness that would unleash their need for retaliation, their will to power over the world. Not being part of the world would give the Jews the distance from the world that would make it possible to weave a net around the globe, to enact a planetary conspiracy that would give rise to universal Jewish domination.

In this guise, the lack of a world that is a prelude to world

domination is not only a statement, it is an accusation: the accusation of machination. And yet in *Weltlosigkeit* there is perhaps something more, something else. Is it therefore necessary to ask what philosophical value the term *weltlos* had for Heidegger, where he spoke about it, and in what sense? What did *weltlos* – worldless – mean to Heidegger?

Heidegger was a philosopher who profoundly changed the way of thinking about the world. In the pages of *Being and Time*, he criticized the traditional representation according to which an autonomous, sovereign subject is opposed to the world understood as the totality of things by which the subject is surrounded, and also as the basis upon which the subject rests. This was the origin of the misleading metaphysical idea that reduces the relation with the world to a cognitive relationship between subject and object, as if being-in-the-world did not mean anything more than continually attempting to know that "objective reality." But knowing, with the most disinterested perspective possible, as for example in the hard sciences, is not the primary way of being-in-the-world; in fact, it is secondary and derived.

Rather, it is necessary to explore being-in-the-world. What does *in*, as in "being-in," mean? It is usually understood as being within, and one imagines that being-in-the-world is like water being in a glass, a bench being in a classroom, the classroom being in the university, the university being in the city. Thus, one thinks of a spatial relationship, by which being-in-the-world would be like being in a container. But to get away from this representation, it suffices to go back to the etymology of the word *in*, which derives from *innan* (to live, to dwell), where *an* refers to being familiar with; being-in-the-world does not indicate spatial presence, but existence. "Being as the infinitive of 'I am'; that is, understood as an existential means to dwell near . . ., to be familiar with . . ."459

Thus, for Heidegger, being-in-the-world was the way in which being exists – constantly emerging – *ex*-isting – from the facticity into which it had been thrown. For him, Being was not simple presence; rather, it was always the potential of being. Being-in-the-world constantly goes beyond itself, projecting itself toward its own possibilities, starting not from a stable, objective base, but

instead emerging from an abyss of nothingness, in which those possibilities threaten to disappear. In its projection, Being comports itself toward the things that it encounters in a praxis that has no cognitive velleity.

Thus, it is not surprising that for Heidegger there was no world without *Dasein*. For him, the world was not an object or a group of objects; it was an existent, a "characteristic" of being-in-the-world (*Dasein*).460 Only where *Dasein* exists is there world. Because it is always *Dasein* that discloses the world. Heidegger – so distant from metaphysics – could thus say that the world is a phenomenological event. To be means to exist, to have familiarity with the world that is brought to light by dwelling in it. But, on the other hand, the world is in turn a structure of being there. This meaning seems clear when someone who is tired of living says "goodbye to the world." One can say "goodbye to the world" only if the world is a peculiarity of existence. Being in the world is *weltlich*, worldly; it is distinguished by its *Weltichkeit*, its "worldliness." If there is no world without being-in-the-world, for that matter there is no existence without the world.

But if existence is worldly – otherwise it would not be what it is, it would not exist – what meaning does *weltlos* have? Heidegger rarely used this adjective, and even more rarely did he use the corresponding noun. The term did occur particularly in the course that he taught in Freiburg in 1929–30, where he presented a "comparative observation" between man, who is *weltbildend*, "world-forming"; the animal, which is *weltarm*, "poor in world"; and the stone, which is *weltlos*, "worldless," "without world."461 Derrida lingered over this comparison, calling into question above all the figure of the animal whose *Weltarmut*, "poverty in world," lends itself to more than one misunderstanding: the animal has, and at the same time does not have, world; not-having is still a way of having, because it cannot accede to Being as such. Derrida called this a "humanist teleology," in which "world" was another way of saying "spirit." Thus, Heidegger does not seem to have been very far from Hegel and from the metaphysics that he sought to destroy.462

Unlike the animal, which, though "poor in world," still has a certain worldliness, and therefore a certain spirituality, the stone is

weltlos, “worldless.” This absence is not deprivation; the stone does not have access to Being and therefore does not have access to the world. If, following Derrida’s argument, there can be open questions regarding the animal, there is no doubt about the stone.

“Worldlessness [. . .] is constitutive of the stone in the sense that the stone *cannot even be deprived* of something like world.”463 And, to clarify, Heidegger went on: “The earth is not given for the stone as an underlying support which bears it, let alone given as earth.” Because, depending upon the circumstances, “the stone crops up here or there, amongst a host of other things, but always in such a way that everything present around it remains essentially inaccessible to the stone itself.”464 The absence of world means that the stone does not succeed in existing. As Heidegger wrote: “The stone is never dead because its being is not a being capable in the sense of what is instinctual or subservient.”465

For Heidegger, the Jew was like the stone – *weltlos*. Rather than unworldly, he was unclean – in the sense of the Latin adjective *immundus* – impure because he was without world, without the worldliness of existence. The image of the stone came up again – a metonymy, as in Hegel, for the philosophical figure of the Jew.466 In Heidegger’s view, the Jew, a petrified and unassimilable remnant in the history of Being, threatens in turn to petrify Being. His a-cosmic, distorting inertia weighs upon the planet, already darkened and desertified; he darkens every light, precludes any clearing, cancels out any place on the earth from which the world might spring forth, in an acceleration which, in the eschatological background, infinitely reiterates the end.

23 Metaphysical Anti-Semitism

What is the image of the Jew that emerges from the *Black Notebooks*? What characteristics does he assume compared with the image drawn by Jünger and by Schmitt? What is the role that Heidegger attributed to the Jew in the question of Being?

First and foremost, we must speak of the *metaphysics of the Jew*. Heidegger’s thinking about this was strictly philosophical; it was not affected by anthropological concepts, much less by biological doctrines. In this sense, it is fully part of the tradition of German

philosophy, from Kant to Hegel and to Nietzsche, from whom Heidegger in effect took themes and arguments, albeit tacitly. In spite of Heidegger's criticism of metaphysics, his way of posing the question was inherited from metaphysics. His peremptory considerations, his disparaging pronouncements, are, after all is said and done, responses to the age-old question: *ti esti?* – what is it?

The *ti esti* question, introduced by Socrates in Plato's *Theaetus* dialogue, was destined to become the paradigmatic question of Western metaphysics. In the dialogue, Socrates asks: "What do you think knowledge is?" Theaetus answers by listing a series of sciences. Irritated, Socrates replies: "But the question, Theaetus, was not to what knowledge belongs, nor how many forms of knowledge there are; for we did not wish to number them, but to find out what *knowledge itself* really is [*ti esti*]."467 During the same years that Heidegger was writing, during 1933 and 1934, it was Ludwig Wittgenstein, in his *Blue Book*, who posed this question, relating it back to the linguistic word play that guided it. When one asks *ti esti?* – what is it? – "the philosopher is led to reject concrete cases as irrelevant." This "contemptuous attitude toward the particular case" is joined with the "craving for generality," with the aspiration for the essence, for that identity of the idea which, solid and immovable, is hidden behind things and which, with great effort, should be brought to the surface.468 The *ti esti* question leads one to believe that there is a *was* – an identical entity – in spite of and beyond any differences. This tendency toward generalization is "the real source of metaphysics, and leads the philosopher into complete darkness."469

Heidegger subjected both the definition of identity and the concept of essence to a similar criticism. And yet the way in which he questioned himself about the Jews was metaphysical, because, albeit implicitly, it responded to the *ti esti* question: What is it? What is the Jew? How is he defined? What is his identity? What is his essence?

Thus, Heidegger shared the preoccupation with defining and identifying the Jew that had prevailed during the years immediately preceding the Nuremberg Laws. Schmitt was consumed by this preoccupation, which he resolved in a tautology:

"the Jew is the Jew."470 The difference is between the "who" of the jurist, who must proceed with the promulgation of laws, and the "what" of the philosopher. *Who* is the Jew? Schmitt found himself on the borderline between these two questions and, although his juridical approach brought him closer to political praxis, he was aware of the relevance of the philosophical question. "What" took priority over "who"; the definition of the identity was the indispensable presupposition for establishing the limits of *who*, the boundaries of who is a Jew.

The philosophical question was raised by Heidegger, who, recognizing its significance, placed it in the context of the history of Being. In this way, it was connected to the tradition that had reflected upon the relationship of the Jew to Being and upon the Jew's place in Western history. Paradoxically, however, when Heidegger examined the question of the Jew, unlike what happened in his questioning about Being, he slipped back into metaphysics and sought to define the essence of the Jew.

But one must speak about the *metaphysics of the Jew* not only because of the nature of the question – of the play on words, Wittgenstein would say – that guided, directed, and determined it. The use of the genitive case has a value that is not only objective, but also subjective. The claim is even more fundamental (or fundamentalist): a definition of the Jew with a capital J was sought – the Jew *par excellence*, to whose essence the flesh-and-blood Jews are connected and reduced. The *metaphysics of the Jew* gives rise to the *metaphysical Jew*, an abstract figure to which are abstrusely conferred the qualities that should belong to the "idea" of a Jew, the model Jew, the ideal Jew, in whose ghostly substance past representations are brought together and upon whom spectral nightmares of the present and recondite visions of the future are projected.

But there is another reason for speaking about metaphysics. The way in which the Jew was defined, in which the supposed characteristics of the Jew were attributed or denied, fits within the age-old metaphysical dichotomies that Heidegger contested elsewhere. So not only is the language metaphysical, but so also is the recourse to those binary, hierarchical oppositions that had dominated the Western tradition.

Proceeding from the original to the derived, the Jew represented the negative pole of every dichotomy, the extreme that should be discarded: soul/body, spirit/letter, internal/external, beginning/end, pure/impure, reality/appearance, autochthonous/foreign, self/other, proper/improper, authentic/inauthentic, heart/intellect, Nature/civilization, unequivocal/ambiguous, concrete/abstract, full/empty, universal/particular, visible/invisible, quality/quantity, creative/reproductive, originality/imitation, life/death, good/evil, sacred/demonic, truth/lie, being/nothingness.

The list could go on, becoming more specific: blood/gold, *nomos*/law, forest/desert, earth/rootlessness, country/city, people/masses, hero/merchant, trusted/treacherous, contract/loyalty, hierarchy/equality, legality/legitimacy, meditation/calculation, nationalism/cosmopolitanism, Reich/revolution.

The *metaphysics of the Jew* produced a *metaphysical Jew*, the idea of a Jew defined *metaphysically* on the basis of the secular oppositions that put the Jew on the outside, pushing him into an inauthentic appearance, relegating him to a soulless abstraction, to a ghostly invisibility, all the way to nothingness.

If this process of dichotomies was perhaps comprehensible for a jurist and a writer, it was not so for a philosopher, who continually posed the metaphysical question and attempted to scratch beneath its surface, to deconstruct its language, rigidified over the centuries, through its etymology. But that is not what happened in the line of demarcation between Being and the Jew.

However the series might be configured, it was the dichotomies of metaphysics that determined the relationship between Being and the Jew, because they are situated much higher up and far before the other dichotomies. This is the origin of the paradoxical position of the philosopher who, if on the one hand he is not directly involved in the political praxis of law and its application – if, in short, he does not participate as the jurist does, in defining and selecting, and therefore appears to be more distant from an immediate responsibility – on the other hand, he is all the more responsible, in that he is close to and contiguous with the metaphysical dichotomies, in that he responds to metaphysics. If the Jew falls outside, if he is condemned to nothingness, it is because the philosopher decides this.

The real Jews, with their innumerable differences (which become completely indifferent) cede their place to the Jew, the *Jude*, the Jew *per se*, as attempts are made to grasp and clutch his essence. Thus, alongside the noun, which is perhaps even too concrete, the nominalized adjective emerges – *das Jüdische*, which, according to the linguistic canons of German philosophy, should condense its *quidditas*. In a similar way, *Judentum* does not indicate Judaism in its history, in the fascinating, tormented, complex vicissitudes of the Jewish people – all the more so since the Jewish people are declared to be *geschichtlos*, without history; *Judentum* is a term indicating a further abstraction in which all of the substantial characteristics attributed to the Jews are melded together in a collective noun, a noun that, assuming the features of a subject, behaves, acts as if it were a single entity, a monolithic agent, a disquieting *moloch* – hostile, threatening – which in the end represents the threat *par excellence*.

Around these three terms – *Jude, Jüdisches, Judentum* – revolves Heidegger's *metaphysical anti-Semitism*. For various reasons, it is preferable to qualify his anti-Semitism as metaphysical rather than *seinsgeschichtlich*, "being-historical," the adjective toward which Trawny seems to lean.471 First of all, the adjective *seinsgeschichtlich* has an esoteric tone and a mystical aura that attenuate and mitigate the brutality of Heidegger's discriminatory gesture; but the term is also misleading because it isolates Heidegger's position, as if it were an *unicum*. In addition – although the history of Being is the landscape in which the Jew appears, and in that history the Jew has no place – if he is expelled from Being, it is because, in his definition of what a Jew is, Heidegger did not abandon metaphysics.

To speak instead of metaphysical anti-Semitism means to consider Heidegger's position alongside the position taken by others, and to compare them – and not only the philosophers of the past, who for Heidegger were part of the framework of Western metaphysics. Heidegger's discriminatory gesture, introducing the concept of "race," was philosophical. It would subsequently be supported and legitimized scientifically by biologism.472 Metaphysical anti-Semitism must still be considered in its fullness and depth; the obstacles are remorse and omissions in which it is difficult to make

a fissure. But for Heidegger's contemporaries, the issue was clear. In *Um des Reiches Zukunft*, published in Freiburg in 1932, Gurian wrote:

> Anti-Semitism, which arose in the new nationalism, has much deeper foundations than the preceding ones in the nineteenth century. The Jew was considered to be a metaphysical phenomenon [*eine metaphysische Erscheinung*], and was rejected based on the entire meaning of life. Metaphysical anti-Semitism [*der metaphysische Antisemitismus*] became a mass faith, after having been, in spite of the popularity of individual *völkisch* authors, above all Chamberlain, an issue only for cultivated circles.473

For that matter, the intense hostility of the most violent anti-Semites, such as Hans Blüher, was first and foremost metaphysical. A point of reference for Schmitt, and very well known in cultured circles, especially for his 1931 work *Die Erhebung Israels*, Blüher attempted to pass off anti-Semitism as a defensive strategy, legitimizing it on a theological and philosophical level.474

Thus, there emerges another motive for speaking of metaphysical anti-Semitism – the relationship between metaphysics and theology, which otherwise would run the risk of being overlooked. Hierarchical oppositions such as soul/body, spirit/letter, internal/external, unwittingly betray a theological provenance. In that sense, metaphysical anti-Semitism rightly reveals its heritage in Christian anti-Judaism: a secular patrimony of lugubrious images, sinister figures, and demonizing metaphors to which Jews have been subjected for centuries; an assemblage of abject reproaches, perverse slanders, and blatant accusations that culminate in the incrimination of the Jews for deicide. This anti-Judaism, which can also act in a purported secular laicism, and can even operate while being forgotten – unwitting but not innocent – has permeated all of Western metaphysics without having been confessed.475

Finally, it is necessary to speak about metaphysical anti-Semitism because it is a way of considering the Jew as a figure, an apparition, a phenomenon – as Gurian suggests – whose essence must be searched for behind and beyond – *meta* – according to the

procedure that characterized metaphysics for Heidegger.

24 The Jew and the "Purification" of Being

Almost with a premonition, in the late 1980s Lyotard denounced Heidegger's metaphysical compromise. Here was the profound, unjustifiable "sin": "Heidegger compromised himself with metaphysics."[476] It was not a "metaphysical sin," but rather the "fault" of metaphysics; not the political error of a misguided, apolitical man who adhered to Nazism because he was opportunistically conforming with the political atmosphere in Germany; not an ordinary, trivial misstep common to other people – but a philosophical error, the error of a philosopher: the philosopher who had called metaphysics into question.

Heidegger compromised himself in a double sense: he accepted the compromise of National Socialism, letting himself become involved, because even before that he had compromised his own journey, exposing it to ruin, destining it to disaster. And this happened when, while on the path to which he was urged in solitude, moving from his outpost to scan the future of the German people – a future upon which he should have been able to look from above, when he was concentrating on opening the way for that decisive passage, in the cold night of Being, before glimpsing the dawn light of the new beginning – he came up against the Jew.

But which Jew? Not one of the many – not one of his students, not one of his teachers, not one of his women friends, not one of his lovers. Not Hannah. Heidegger encountered the shadow of the Jew – the specter, the projection, the *figure* of the Jew, the *figural* Jew, burdened with a metaphysical weight. It was this *Jude* who had to answer for his own belonging to *Judentum*.

But how? The Jew seemed to have always been exempt from any attempt to conceptualize his essence. Already Kant's Jew, confined to heteronomy, to the law of the Other, and to everything that autonomous reason should not be, exhorted to euthanasia, had been rejected by metaphysics. Hegel, instead, had stopped the Jew at the gates of Europe, of Christianity, of salvation. Stubbornly faithful to his perfidious rejection, capable of bearing the promise and incapable of understanding it, that unhappy conscience, the emblematic figure of scission who seemed not to have anything of

his own, no property to list, that “heart of stone” petrified to the letter of the law of the Pharisees who would not let himself be overcome and opposed resistance, had been “negated,” excluded from the dialectic of universal history. Nietsche had even indicated falsification as the cipher of the Jew’s existence.

For Heidegger, too, the Jew was an obstacle, a stone in the pathway of the history of Being. In order to remove him, to clear the path, the most simple way was to define him. What other method could be as effective against one who, by definition, was a trespasser? Thus, Heidegger attempted to capture the secret, immutable essence of the Jew. Even in his blood. Perhaps his essence was hidden in that mysterious fluid, halfway between body and soul, the arcane metaphysician of Judaism. And in order to define the Jew, Heidegger re-descended to metaphysics; he gave in to the impulse to legitimize his atavistic repugnance for the Other who was closest to him. He supported the cult of *Art* [form, type, species], the formative sign that must remain identical; he shared, without mentioning it, the autopoietic myth of the absolute Aryan as opposed to the formless populace, unsightly, devoid of myths. Except that Heidegger uplifted, so to speak, the argument, upon which he conferred an ontological prestige, and he invented the notion of “race,” a metaphysics of the Jew. It is here that metaphysical anti-Semitism openly shows the lack of a foundation that characterizes every form of anti-Semitism.

Heidegger did not put the issue into a new perspective; in fact, he made it worse, rendering it more perspicuous. He clearly said that a “Jewish question” – the *Judenfrage* – existed, and he linked it to the *Seinsfrage*, the question of Being. Never had the Jew had more importance – he was at the heart of Being and of philosophy. Never had the Jew represented such a great threat.

The Jew whom Heidegger encountered upon the road of the history of Being blocked his way, prevented him from reaching the source of purity, the *Reinheit*. It was as if the Jew were warning him that the source was not there; nor was purity. Neither source, nor origin, nor purity, nor authenticity, nor autochthony – not for the Jew, but also not for the German.

That warning resounded in Heidegger’s ears as a threat, so much so that it seemed to articulate what the “call of his conscience” had

been repeating to him for some time. The Jew told him that his *Enstsheidung*, his decision, or rather his *Scheidung*, his separation in order to move toward Being, was a dead end.

For Heidegger, the Jew undermined Being. He jeopardized Being's safety and purity; he anarchically subverted Being's *arche*. This was what the *Judenfrage* had to do with the *Seinsfrage*. The Jews were uncomfortable witnesses to the non-coincidence of self with self, of the immemorial expropriation, of the insuperable alterity, of the impossibility of being oneself. The Jews were capable of making Being implode, because, as undefinable beings, they could only be spoken of in undecidable, open propositions. They had resisted the logic of Being for centuries; they had eluded syntheses and conclusions, like the Talmudic questioning that claims a *tertium* and a *quartum datur*. The Jews interfered with every program of appropriation, every passion for mastery, every obsession with domination, every foundation and self-foundation, every will to power, every compulsion to fulfillment. Therefore, National Socialism had chosen them as enemies.

In the eyes of anyone who believed that the question of Being was the only authentic question for the West, the place of the Jews began to become uncertain, unstable, shaky. Indeed, was there even a place for the Jews? What about the topology suggested to Jünger? Also for Heidegger, the Jew seemed to have no place. What place could the Jew ever have in the history of Being, which he undermined from so close by? The non-place of the Jews became ineluctably concrete.

Judaism – Heidegger admonished – was complicit with metaphysics. One had favored the other. Therefore, in order to recover from metaphysics – the sickness of the West – it was necessary to be cured of Judaism. But Judaism seemed to be irremissible. And yet for the West, the ultimate possibility for salvation was to go back up the path toward the uncontaminated beginning, toward the purity that was in danger of being lost forever. The Jew whom Heidegger had met on that path, the accomplice of metaphysics, was Being entified, was an entity sundered from Being, who sought to make his own separateness universal, his own rootlessness planetary, forever impeding access

to Being. His machination was his task in the history of the world.

In an extreme ontological difference, the Jew appeared to be a being detached from Being, without any possibility of recovering the connection. Accused of the abandonment of Being, the Jew was condemned to be abandoned by Being.

On that path, where he walked looking down upon the abyss, Heidegger got an inkling that the Jew whom he had encountered on his way was not a remnant, not a petrified, obsolete residue of that West, "catholic" by vocation – in the velleity of being "total," as Schmitt would have it – that West which was incapable of ridding itself of the Jew.477 Heidegger intuited that the Jew was beyond – indeed, that he was *the* beyond. He was not the ontological enemy. The limit that he constituted was not a war trench; rather, it was the limit of the beyond that only the Other, in his alterity, could disclose.

And yet Heidegger retreated. Being was more important. Drop the Jew. Heidegger repeated a gesture that had already been made repeatedly by other philosophers. There was no place for the Jew in the history of Being. Heidegger's gesture of exclusion was, however, all the more disturbing, because it was carried out in the time of poverty and the night of the world, on the edge of the abyss. So he did not hesitate to speak of a "first purification of *Being* from its most profound deformation on account of the supremacy of beings."478 At the time that he was writing, at the beginning of the 1940s, the *Reinigung des Seins* – the purification of Being – had already become *Vernichtung*, annihilation.

25 "What Is It about No-thing?"

"Why be-ing, after all, and not rather no-thing?" (*Warum ist überhaupt Seindes und nich viel mehr Nichts?*) This was the question that Heidegger asked at the end of his inaugural lecture as rector of the University of Freiburg in 1929, taking up a famous formula of Leibniz ("Why is there something rather than nothing?").479 In this way, he raised the question *par excellence* about metaphysics, which, connected with the question about the ontological difference between Being and nothing, went beyond

the circumscribed ontic sphere of beings. Rejected as a fantasy by the sciences, and by a way of thinking that was subordinate to scientific argumentation, the question about nothing was thus placed at the center of philosophy.

“What about no-thing?” Every being, inasmuch as it is finite, is connected by itself to something else, to that which the being is not, to no-thing. Although there can be no empirical certainty of this, everyone knows what nothing is, because in daily life, when it is found in the midst of beings, they are assailed by anxiety, *Angst*, which is not simply fear of something determinate; rather, it is dread of nothingness, in which everything seems to plunge into a sort of indifference. The being as a whole fades into the distance, diminishes, allowing nothingness to come to the surface. This emergence of nothingness, as the being retracts, was called “to nihilate” by Heidegger. He also spoke of *Nichtung*, “nihilation.”480 The nebulous glow of nothingness is, however, dimmed by dread: the being discovers that it is “immersed in nothingness,” but nothingness is already always beyond the being, in that constitutive transcendence of existence, and, in the final end, of freedom. To use Heidegger’s own word, the being discovers that it is “the placeholder of no-thing,” *Platzhalter des Nichts*.481

Far from being an object, or an ordinary being, no-thing is “that which makes possible” Being for the human being. It is from no-thing that Being from time to time emerges. Before every “non,” every negation, every *Verneinung*, there comes no-thing. But if Being emerges from the depths of no-thing, then Being and nothingness are indissolubly interwoven. But isn’t it incautious to think of such an interweaving? On close consideration, is it even more incautious to place in doubt the age-old metaphysical axiom *ex nihilo nihil fit*, “out of nothing comes nothing”?482 Heidegger, however, did not hesitate to turn even this axiom around: for him, from nothing comes every being.

There is no trace of this notion in philosophical tradition nor in theological tradition. For their part, the Greeks always imagined a primordial chaos that would become ordered in the form of a *kósmos*. But the exception was the Kabbalah. It was the Kabbalists who had perceived between the silent crevices of

creation the dark chasm of nothingness, deciphering it in the expressions *tohu vabohu, tehom, choshekh* – the first verses of the *Bereshit*. They broke down the fictitious barrier to nothingness that had been raised by philosophers in order to protect reason. They ventured into the dark shroud of nothingness, not only to probe its power to annihilate, but also to experience its nihilation. For the Kabbalists, too, nothing nihilated.

Thus, one cannot fail to see this surprising convergence, in nothingness, and in the creation of nothingness, between Heidegger and the Kabbalah483 – a convergence that extends also to the way of understanding nothingness, which is not seen merely as a negation. Absent in its presence, inaccessible in its accessibility, nothingness is the profoundness of Being, it is the shadow from which every light arises – all of the candelabra of the world are hung upon nothingness, *Ain*.

Ain turns into *Anì*, nothingness; it becomes the I, the I of God who by speaking creates. Reckless, the Kabbalists extended nothingness all the way to God; for them, nothingness was God himself in his most hidden aspect. Being and nothingness in God are intimately intertwined. From nothing – that is, from himself – God pulls back in order to let the beings that he creates be. So creation is not an emanation, but rather a pulling back, a contraction – it is the exile of God.484

Heidegger, in turn, in his *Letter on "Humanism,"* wrote: "Being nihilates – as being."485 Thus, nothingness, which takes up its dwelling place in Being, suggests the way to decipher it. But it also shows the danger of a way of being that, insensible to the gravity of Being, becomes rigid – almost petrified – in beings. The scission from Being takes place at the same time as the defection of nothingness. And then comes the plunge into nihilism.

Where Being is deserted, nothingness – *das Nichts* – takes on another tone, another meaning. It is the nothingness that is inserted into another word – not *Nichtung*, nihilization, but *Vernichtung*, annihilation. Heidegger spoke about this in his courses on Nietzsche. He referred to a way of thinking that, in order to be constructive, must exclude, *ausschieden*. It must eliminate whatever encumbers the path, blocks the way, "that which, in that

it is ballast and fixation, impedes going high, *In-die-Hohe-Gehen*." Annihilation, *Vernichten*, "ensures against the accumulation of all the conditions of decline."486 To emphasize the radicalness of an annihilation that is an essential transference to nothingness, elsewhere Heidegger inserted two hyphens into the word *Vernichtung*: "What is the nothing of Being which we have considered the face of the actual an-nihil-ation [*Ver-nichts-ung*] of all beings, whose violence, encroaching from all sides, makes almost every act of resistance futile?"487

In a critical essay on nothingness in Heidegger, in which he draws attention to the "resonance" of the metaphysical question that it was impossible not to perceive during the postwar period, Taubes de-couples the question from theology and points out its connection with politics. The metaphysical question betrays "the secret appointment between philosophy and politics."488

The otic nothingness that approaches annihilation, that negates existence, that is the nothing of ashes and smoke, seems to have no more connection with the nothing that found its dwelling place in Being. So the metaphysical question *par excellence* – What is it about no-thing? – takes on another resonance.

Notes

1. José Pablo Feinmann, *Heidegger's Shadow*, trans. Joshua M. Price and María Costanza Guzmán (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2016), 41.

2. See Heidegger, *Letter on "Humanism,"* trans. Frank A. Capuzzi, in *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper Perennial, 2008), 213–66, 231.

3. Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu, ed. John Sallis (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012), 322ff.

4. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward S. Robinson (New York: HarperPerennial / Modern Thought, 2008), §72, 356. For a critical view of the history of

being, see Thomas Rentsch, *Martin Heidegger – Das Sein und der Tod: Eine Kritische Einführung* (Munich: Piper, 1999), 175ff.

5. On the grammar and the etymology of "being," see Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 63–81.

6. Jacques Derrida, *Heidegger: The Question of Being and History*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 24.

7. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI: Black Notebooks 1931–1938*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), 152.

8. Heidegger, *The History of Beyng*, trans. William McNeill and Jeffrey Powell (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2015), 140.

9. Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger, *Letters 1925–1975*, trans. Andrew Shields (New York: Harcourt, 2004), 84.

10. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI: Black Notebooks 1938–1939*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), §3, 72.

11. Ibid.

12. Peter Trawny, *Adyton. Heideggers esoterische Philosophie* (Berlin: Matthes & Seitz, 2010).

13. Heidegger, *Contributi alla filosofia: (dall'evento)*, trans. Franco Volpi (Milan: Adelphi Edizioni, 2007), 227.

14. Heidegger, *Mindfulness*, trans. Parvis Emad and Thomas Kalary (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 358–9.

15. Ibid.

16. "We also knew about his anti-Semitism," wrote Toni Cassirer in her memoirs: Toni Cassirer, *Mein Leben mit Ernst*

Cassirer (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellshaft, 2003), 187.

17. Heidegger and Arendt, *Letters 1925–1975*, 52–3.

18. See Elzbieta Ettinger, *Hannah Arendt / Martin Heidegger* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2015), 37. On the relationship between Heidegger and Arendt, see also Daniel Maier-Katkin, *Stranger from Abroad: Hannah Arendt, Martin Heidegger, Friendship and Forgiveness* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2010).

19. See chapter I, section 4, above.

20. See Léon Poliakov, *Harvest of Hate: The Nazi Program for the Destruction of the Jews of Europe*, trans. Albert J. George (New York: Holocaust Publications, 1979), 26.

21. Karl Löwith, *My Life in Germany Before and After 1933: A Report* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 57. Poliakov saw a "golden rule for erstwhile anti-Semitism" when anti-Semites boasted about having Jewish friends; see Léon Poliakov, *History of Anti-Semitism*, vol. III: *From Voltaire to Wagner*, trans. Miriam Kochan (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 440.

22. See Raphael Gross, *Carl Schmitt and the Jews: The "Jewish Question," the Holocaust, and German Legal Theory*, trans. Joel Golb (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2007), 21–2.

23. Letter cited in Thomas R. Nevin, *Simone Weil: Portrait of a Self-Exiled Jew* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 432.

24. On this subject, see Massimo Ferrari Zumbini, *Le radici del male: L'antisemitismo in Germania da Bismarck a Hitler* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2001), 71ff.

25. Heidegger, "The Jewish Contamination of German Spiritual Life," in *Philosophical and Political Writing*, trans. and ed. Manfred Stassen (New York and London: Continuum, 2003), 1.

See also Ulrich Sieg, "Die Verjudung des deuchen Geistes. Ein unbekannter Brief Heideggers," *Die Zeit* 52 (1989): 50. See also the testimony of Max Müller: when a Jew, Siegfried Thannhauser, became a tenured professor in 1931, "[Heidegger] called attention to the fact that originally there were only two Jewish physicians working in Internal Medicine and that in the end there were only two non-Jews in this department. It did bother him somewhat"; Max Müller, "A Philosopher and Politics: A Conversation with Martin Heidegger," trans. Lisa Harries, in *Martin Heidegger and National Socialism: Question and Answers*, ed. Günther Neske and Emil Kettering (New York: Paragon House, 1990), 187.

26. Heidegger, *Letters to His Wife, 1915–1970*, ed. Gertrud Heidegger (Cambridge: Polity, 2008), 28.

27. See Jacob Katz, *The Darker Side of Genius: Richard Wagner's Anti-Semitism* (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1986), 185. On the genealogy of *Verjudung*, see Steven E. Aschheim, "'The Jew Within': The Myth of 'Judaization' in Germany," in *Culture and Catastrophe: German and Jewish Confrontations with National Socialism and Other Crises* (New York University Press, 1996), 45–68. See also Pierre-André Taguieff, *Wagner contre les Juifs* (Paris: Berg International Éditeurs, 2012), 250ff.

28. Richard Wagner, *Judaism in Music and Other Essays*, trans. William Ashton Ellis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 81–2.

29. Ibid., 82.

30. Ibid., 100.

31. Wilhelm Marr, *Der Sieg des Judenthums über das Germanenthum* (Bern: Costenoble, 1879), 8; Eugen Düring, *Die Judenfrage als Racen-, Sittenund Culturfrage* (Karlsruhe: Reuther, 1881), 144; Adolph Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. James Murphy (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1939), 211, 337; Alfred Rosenberg, *The Myth of the Twentieth*

Century: An Evaluation of the Spiritual–Intellectual Confrontations of our Age, trans. Vivian Bird (San Francisco, CA: Blurb Publishers, 2017), 123.

32. Heidegger, *Letters to his Wife*, 50.

33. Léon Poliakov, *Harvest of Hate*, 4.

34. Heidegger, *Letters to his Wife*, 80.

35. Ibid., 137.

36. See Gertrud Heidegger's preface to ibid.

37. Ibid., 77.

38. Ibid., 99, 133, 134. The *Jüdische Rundschau* was the journal of the Zionist Federation in Germany.

39. Cited in Jasper's "Letter to the Freiburg University Denazification Committee, December 22, 1945," trans. Richard Wolin, in *The Heidegger Controversy*, ed. Richard Wolin (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 148.

40. Heidegger**, "**Zum Gutachten über Baumgarten," in *Reden und andere Zeugnisse* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2000), 373. Nevertheless, Heidegger also expressed two favorable opinions about Fränkel; see ibid., 140–1, 144–6.

41. *Martin Heidegger / Elisabeth Blochmann: Briefwechsel, 1918–1969*, ed., Joachim W. Storck (Marbach am Neckar: Deutsche Schillergesellschaft), quoted in Emmanuel Faye, *Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy in Light of the Unpublished Seminars of 1933–1935*, trans. Michael B. Smith (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 48.

42. Heidegger, "Hönigswald aus der Schule des Neukantianismus," in *Reden und andere Zeugnisse*, 132; see Claudia Schorcht, *Philosophie an den bayerischen Universitäten 1933–1945* (Erlangen: Fischer, 1990), 161.

43. Heidegger, "Hönigswald," 132.

44. See Peter Trawny, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish World Conspiracy*, trans. Andrew J. Mitchell (University of Chicago Press, 2015), 3, 37, 81, 87ff. Trawny's thesis, which is relatively interlocutory, is that Heidegger's thought was, at least in part, "contaminated." The word "contamination" arouses a sense of perplexity, because it evokes the metaphor of the Jew who infects and brings impurity – even, paradoxically, in an anti-Semitic discourse.

45. Trawny maintains that the first passage in the *Black Notebooks* in which Heidegger talked about the Jews was from 1937, although the *Ponderings VIII* are from 1938. See Trawny, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish World Conspiracy*, 20.

46. But the theme of Judaism must have already been at the center of Schmitt's reflections much earlier. See Gross, *Carl Schmitt and the Jews*, 18.

47. Heidegger, *What is Metaphysics?* trans. Thomas Sheehan: http://religiousstudies. stanford.edu/. . ./1929–What-is-Metaphbysics-2013–November.

48. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV: Black Notebooks 1939–1941*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), §24, 37.

49. In Heidegger's *Gelassenheit*, calculating thought was seen as the antithesis of meditative thought. See Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking: A Translation of Gelassenheit*, trans. John M. Anderson (New York: Harper Perennial, 1969), 46ff.

50. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, §211, 66; cf. 159–60, 348–9.

51. Cf. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §1, 215.

52. Ibid., §18, 91.

53. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, §79, 104; §84, 108. But, on the theme of the enemy, see section 18 of the present chapter.

54. Ibid., §91, 344.

55. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §2, 215.

56. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 191.

57. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, §210, 198.

58. Heidegger, *The Beginning of Western Philosophy: Interpretation of Anaximander and Parmenides*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015).

59. Oswald Spengler, *Decline of the West*, trans. Arthur Helps and Charles Francis Atkinson, ed. Helmut Werner (Oxford University Press, 1991).

60. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, §105, 351.

61. Cf. ibid., §43, 88.

62. Ibid., §208, 143.

63. Ibid., §145, 125. See also *Ponderings XII–XV*, 67–8.

64. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, §71, 21.

65. Ibid., §108, 29.

66. Max Weber, *Gesamtausgabe*, vol. II/9: *Briefe 1915–1917* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 66.

67. Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. Quentin Lauer (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1965), 155.

68. Ibid., 179.

69. Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister,"* trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 43ff.; Heidegger, *The Beginning of Western Philosophy*.

70. Heidegger, "Logos and Language," in *The Heidegger Reader*, trans. Jerome Veith, ed. Günter Figal (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009). Heidegger had already spoken

about *Neger* and *Senegalneger* in his *Kriegsnotesemester* lessons of 1919. See Heidegger, "The Environmental Experience, 1919," in *The Heidegger Reader*, 33–7, 34. See also Heidegger, "Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie," in GA 56/57 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1999), 71–3.

71. This calls into question the widespread notion that sees anti-Semitism as a variant of racism. See, for example, Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (London: Verso, 2016), 137–72. On the heart of darkness of totalitarianism, see Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York and London: Harcourt, Inc., 1976), 185ff.

72. This was the origin of the "Madagascar Plan" to relocate European Jews to the island of Madagascar. See Poliakov, *Harvest of Hate*, 43ff. The plan was later abandoned because it was a response to the canons of traditional racism, not to the Nazi's biopolitical program for worldwide extermination. See Philippe Burrin, *Hitler and the Jews: The Genesis of the Holocaust*, trans. Patsy Southgate (London: E. Arnold, 1994), 60ff.

73. Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine,"* trans. William McNeill and Julia Ireland (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), 109.

74. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §50, 37–8.

75. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 175.

76. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, 331.

77. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §37, 26.

78. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, §12, 24–6; §1, 3.

79. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, §74, 100. On the theme of autochthony, see Charles R. Bambach, *Heidegger's Roots: Nietzsche, National Socialism, and the Greeks*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), 180–246.

80. See Florian Grosser, *Revolution denken: Heidegger und das Politische 1919–1969* (Munich: Beck, 2011), 116ff.

81. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 41.

82. Ibid., 42ff., 51.

83. See chapter II, sections 2 and 4, above.

84. Heidegger, *On Hegel's Philosophy of Right: The 1934 Seminar and Interpretative Essays*, ed. Peter Trawny, Marcia Cavalcante Schuback, and Michael Marder, trans. Andrew J. Mitchell (New York and London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 23.

85. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §4, 75–6.

86. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 94–5.

87. On this subject, see Carlo Saviani, *L'Oriente di Heidegger* (Genoa: Il Melangolo, 1998).

88. S. Krauss, "Boden," in *Encyclopaedia Judaica. Das Judentum in der Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. Jakob Klatzkin and Ismar Elbogen (Berlin: Eschkol, 1929), 902. An analogous case is Mordche Sew-Wolf Rapaport, "Bodenbesitz," in *Jüdisches Lexikon*, vol. I, ed. Georg Herlitz and Bruno Kirschner (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1927), 1097–8.

89. On this topic, see chapter IV, section 9, below.

90. See Enzo Traverso, *La violenza nazista: Una genealogia* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002), 157ff.

91. Paul Mendes-Flohr, "Werner Sombart's 'The Jews and Modern Capitalism': An Analysis of Its Ideological Premises," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 21 (1976): 87–107, 92. See also Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge University Press, 1984), 130–51.

92. Werner Sombart, *The Jews and Modern Capitalism*, trans. Mordecai Epstein (Kitchener, Ontario: Batoche Books, 2001), 146.

93. Ibid., 174.

94. Ibid., 185.

95. Ibid., 132.

96. Ibid., 240.

97. Ibid., 233. On the theme of desertification, see section 10 below. Sartre would later define the anti-Semite as "the poet of real property": Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, trans. George J. Becker (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 16.

98. Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, 233.

99. Werner Sombart, *A New Social Philosophy*, trans. Karl F. Geiser (Princeton University Press, 1937), 146, 151.

100. Heidegger, *Letters to His Wife*, 45. See also what Heidegger wrote years later when he refused a call to a professorship in Berlin: Heidegger, "Why Do I Stay in the Provinces?" trans. Thomas Sheehan, in *Philosophical and Political Writings*, ed. Manfred Stassen (New York: Continuum, 2003), 13–14.

101. Ferdinand Tönnies, "Studie zur Entwicklungsgeschichte des Spinoza," *Vierteljarhrsschrift für wissenschaftliche Philosophie* 7 (1883): 162–75, especially 169.

102. On the "mystery" that Spinoza represented for the doctrinaires of the Third Reich, see Irvin D. Yalom, *The Spinoza Problem* (New York: Basic Books, 2013). Spinoza is rarely present in Heidegger's work; in the course that he taught on Schelling in 1936, Heidegger mentioned Spinoza with these words: "To avoid a misunderstanding here, we must emphasize that Spinoza's philosophy cannot be equated with Jewish philosophy. Alone the familiar fact that Spinoza was evicted from the Jewish community is significant" (Heidegger, *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Joan Stambaugh [Athens, OH: Ohio University Press,

1985], 67).

103. See Michael Brenner, *The Renaissance of Jewish Culture in Weimar Germany* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996); Peter Gay, *Freud, Jews and Other Germans* (Oxford University Press, 1979).

104. See Donald L. Niewyk, *The Jews in Weimar Germany* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2000), 67.

105. Paul Valéry, "The Crisis of the Mind," in *Collected Works*, trans. Denise Folliot and Jackson Mathews (Princeton University Press, 1971). Heidegger referred explicitly to this work by Valéry in *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, trans. Keith Hoeller (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2000), 200–1.

106. Max Scheler, *Erkenntnis und Arbeit* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1977), 74. On this theme, which is usually neglected, see Otto Pöggeler, *Heidegger in seiner Zeit* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1999), 227–32.

107. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 134–5.

108. Karl Jaspers, *Reason and Existenz: Five Lectures*, trans. William Earle (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1997), 88.

109. See Heidegger's lecture on Schlageter, given on May 26, 1933, in *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Wolin (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), 40ff.

110. Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), §40, 174.

111. Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, trans. Lewis Wirth and Edward Shils (London: Routledge, 1997), 137.

112. See Miguel de Beistegui, *Heidegger and the Political: Dystopias* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 42ff.

113. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 135.

114. Heidegger, *Logic as the Question Concerning the Essence of Language*, trans. Wanda Gregory and Yvonne Unna (Albany: SUNY Press, 2009), 7.

115. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 49.

116. Ibid., 50. Heidegger returned to this theme again after the war. See "Overcoming Metaphysics," in *The End of Philosophy*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 84–110.

117. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 51.

118. Ibid., 52.

119. Heidegger, *Logic as the Question Concerning the Essence of Language*, 7. There is a similar passage in Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §49, 254–5.

120. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §48, 254.

121. Note that, in German, *Intelligenz* means both "intelligence" and "intelligentsia."

122. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §39, 124.

123. The polemic is obviously also against the school of Weber, and in general against the sociologists.

124. Ibid., §92, 200.

125. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 171.

126. In his Zollikon seminars, held between 1959 and 1969, Heidegger devoted a considerable amount of space to Freud. See Heidegger, *Zollicon Seminars: Protocols, Conversations, Letters*, trans. Franz Meyr and Richard Askay, ed. Medard Boss (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001). Heidegger's dialogue with Freud would accompany him from the 1920s until the time of his last writings.

127. Theodor W. Adorno, *Prisms*, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholson and Samuel Weber (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983), 26.

128. Gerhard Sauder, *Die Bücherverbrennung. Zum 10. Mai 1933* (Munich: Hanser, 1983), 89. See also Erich Kästner, *Über das Verbrennen von Büchern* (Zurich: Atrium, 2013), 7ff.

129. Heidegger, "Only a God Can Save Us," interview with *Der Spiegel* (1966), trans. William J. Richardson, in *Heidegger the Man and the Thinker*, ed. Thomas Sheehan (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publications, 2010), 50.

130. Grassi recalled: "during his rectorate, they burned the books by Jews and Marxists, testimonies of a 'degenerate' knowledge" (Ernesto Grassi, *Potenza dell'immagine: Rivalutazione della retorica*, trans. Liliana Croce and Massimo Marassi [Milan: Guerrini, 1989], 12).

131. *Der Alemanne*, June 20, 1933, 12.

132. Leo Löwenthal, "Caliban's Legacy (1983)," in *Critical Theory and Frankfurt Theorists: Lectures–Correspondence–Conversations* (New Brunswick and Oxford: Transaction Publishers, 1989), 105.

133. See chapter I, section 9, above. Derrida's essay started a debate that is documented in the volume *Of Derrida, Heidegger and Spirit*, ed. David Wood (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1993).

134. Heidegger, *Duns Scotus' Theory of the Categories and of Meaning*, trans. John van Buren, in *Supplements: From the Earliest Essays to Being and Time and Beyond*, ed. John van Buren (State University of New York, 2002), 68.

135. As quoted in Jacques Derrida, *Of Spirit*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (University of Chicago Press, 1991), 2.

136. Ibid., 24.

137. See Heidegger, *Being and Time*, §10.

138. Derrida, *Of Spirit*, 100ff.

139. Ibid., 100.

140. Ibid., 99.

141. Marlène Zarader, *The Unthought Debt: Heidegger and the Hebraic Heritage*, trans. Bettina Bergo (Stanford University Press, 2006), 175.

142. Heidegger, "Language in the Poem," in *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (San Francisco: Harper One, 2009), 179.

143. Derrida, *Of Spirit*, 84.

144. Friedrich Hölderlin, "Bread and Wine," in *Odes and Elegies*, trans. Nick Hoff (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press), 132ff. See also Heidegger, *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, 88ff.

145. Heidegger, "Das abendländische Gespräch," in *Zu Hölderlin – Griechenlandreisen*, GA 75 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2000), 143.

146. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, §163, 130.

147. Ibid., §61, 93.

148. Ibid., §60, 165.

149. Ernst Jünger, "Total Mobilization," in *The Heidegger Controversy*, ed. Wolin, 129.

150. Ernst Jünger, *"Die Totale Mobilmachung,"* in *Zweite Abtheilung: Essays I*, Sämtliche Werke 7 (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2002), 119–42. On Heidegger and Jünger, see section 17 below.

151. Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*, 100.

152. On violence, see ibid., 222.

153. Ibid., 99; Heidegger, *The History of Beyng*, 42.

154. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, §38, 44.

155. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §4, 75–6.

156. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, §72, 85.

157. Ibid., §35, 41–2.

158. Ibid., §35, 41.

159. Ibid., 206.

160. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, trans. Thomas Common (Frankfurt: e-artnow, 2016), 235.

161. Heidegger, *The History of Beyng*, 42.

162. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 3.

163. Heidegger, *The History of Beyng*, 43.

164. Heidegger, “On Ernst Jünger (1),” in *The Heidegger Reader*, 195.

165. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 206.

166. Jacob Taubes, *Occidental Eschatology*, trans. David Ratmoko (Stanford University Press, 2009), 19.

167. See Benedict de Spinoza, *Theological–Political Treatise*, trans. Michael Silverthorne and Jonathan Israel (Cambridge University Press, 2007), ch. 17, sections 7–9, 213–14.

168. Heidegger, *Mindfulness*, 12.

169. Heidegger, “On the Essence and Concept of Φύσις in Aristotle’s *Physics* B, I (1939),” trans. Thomas Sheehan, in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeil (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 183–230, 189.

170. Heidegger, *The History of Beyng*, 43.

171. Ibid.

172. Heidegger, *Country Path Conversations*, trans. Bret W. Davis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), 133–4.

173. Quoted in Gerard E. Markle, *Meditations of a Holocaust Traveler* (State University of New York Press, 1995), 20.

174. See Werner Jochmann, *Gesellschaft und Judenfeindschaft in Deutschland 1870–1945* (Hamburg: Christians, 1991), 13–29.

175. See Eberhard Jäckel, *Hitler's World View: A Blueprint for Power*, trans. Herbert Arnold (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), 59.

176. Dietrich Eckart, "Das Judentum in und außer uns," in *Vermächtnis*, ed. Alfred Rosenberg (Munich: Zentralverlag d. NSDAP, 1928), 99.

177. Joseph Goebbels, *Michael: A German's Destiny Revealed in His Diary: A Novel* (San Diego, CA: Grand Oak Books, 2016), 63. On the Jew as Antichrist, see Claus-Ekkehard Bärsch, *Die politische Religion des Nationalsozialismus* (Munich: Fink Verlag, 2002), 71ff., 131ff. See also Gerhard Kurz, "Braune Apocalpyse," in *Apokalypse und Erinnerung*, ed. Jürgen Brokoff and Joachim Jacob (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2002), 131ff.

178. Philippe Burrin, *Nazi Anti-Semitism: From Prejudice to the Holocaust*, trans. Janet Lloyd (New York: New Press, 2005), 49.

179. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, §38, 44.

180. It was precisely during these years that this program was beginning to be carried out in the lagers.

181. Ibid., §38, 44.

182. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathrustra*, trans. Graham Parkes (Oxford University Press, 2005), 79–80.

183. Ibid., 204.

184. Heidegger, "On the Advantages and Disadvantages of History for Life," in *Interpretation of Nietzsche's Second Untimely Meditation*, trans. Ullrich Haase and Mark Sinclair (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), §138, 217ff.

185. Ibid., §51, 96.

186. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 422.

187. Ibid., 434.

188. Ibid., 449.

189. Leviticus/Vaikrà 19: 2.

190. Ibid., 17: 10–12. Strangely, Losurdo seems to maintain that the Judaism of those years defended a community based on blood. See Domenico Losurdo, *La comunità, la morte, l'Occidente: Heidegger e "l'ideologia della guerra"* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2001), 100ff.

191. Carl Schmitt, "The Constitution of Freedom," in *Weimar: A Jurisprudence of Crisis*, trans. Belinda Cooper (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2000), 325.

192. Rosenberg, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*,

193.See also Roberto Esposito, *Dieci pensieri sulla politica* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2011), 218ff. 193 Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, §38, 44–5.

194. Ibid.

195. The volumes of Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe* that have been published during the last few years have contributed to changing the perspective about his attitude toward race. Articles and essays for and against, which strove either to prove Heidegger's distance from the concept of race or his adherence to it, using tenuous evidence – such as those by Barash or Faye – have at this point lost importance. See Jeffrey Andrew

Barash, “Heidegger et la question de la race,” *Les Temps modernes* 63 (2008): 290–305; and Emmanuel Faye, “Subjectivity and Race in Heidegger’s Writings,” *Philosophy Today* 55, 3 (2011): 268–81.

196. Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, §8, 25–31.

197. Derrida, *Of Spirit*, 23.

198. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, §26, 38.

199. Heidegger, *The History of Beyng*, 188.

200. Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Volumes Three and Four*, trans. Joan Stambaugh and Frank A. Capruzzi, ed. David Farell Krell (New York: Harper & Row, 1991), 231; *Ponderings VII–XI*, §45, 252–4. On Nietzsche’s ambivalence, see chapter II, section 5, above.

201. Heidegger, *Logic as the Question Concerning the Essence of Language*, 57.

202. Heidegger, *The History of Beyng*, 61.

203. Victor Klemperer, *Language of the Third Reich: LTI: Lingua Tertii Imperii*, trans. Martin Brady (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 98.

204. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 51.

205. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 153.

206. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §4, 75.

207. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, §52, 91.

208. Ibid., §195, 139.

209. Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 127.

210. Heidegger, *Logic as the Question Concerning the*

Essence of Language, 131.

211. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, §81, 104.

212. Heidegger, *Ponderings XI–XV*, §24, 36.

213. See Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 1011–12; and Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988).

214. Carl Schmitt, *Glossarium: Aufzeichnungen aus den Jahren 1947 bis 1958* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2015).

215. *Reichsgesetzblatt* [*Reich Legal Gazette*], vol. I, 195.

216. Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Assimilation and Racial Anti-Semitism: The Iberian and the German Models*, Leo Baeck Memorial Lecture 26 (New York: Leo Baeck Institute, 1986). But Yerushalmi did not see that, in the apocalyptic vision of the Nazis, the Jew was no longer necessary as a witness to a divine plan, remaining only as an enemy to be eliminated.

217. Günther Anders, *Besuch im Hades: Auschwitz und Breslau 1966* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1979), 24–5.

218. On this topos, see chapter II, section 2, above.

219. For a reconstruction, see Furio Jesi, *L'accusa del sangue: la macchina mitologica antisemita* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2007), 29ff.

220. Between 1873 and 1900, thirteen trials for "ritual murder" took place in Germany. As late as 1949, in a trial in Munich resulting from an allegation brought by a landlady against a Jewish tenant, this same type of accusation re-surfaced. See the *Neue Zeitung*, July 30, 1949.

221. Heinrich Heine, *The Rabbi of Bacharach*, trans. Charles Godfrey Leland (New York: Mondial, 2008), 21.

222. Heidegger, *Introduction to Philosophy – Thinking and*

Poetizing, trans. Phillip Jacques Braunstein (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 54.

223. Ibid.

224. Matthew 27: 25.

225. On this theme, see Édouard Conte and Cornelia Essner, *La quête de la race: une antropologie du Nazisme* (Paris: Hachette, 1995), 13ff.

226. Rosenberg, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*, 79. On the "mysticism" of blood, see Wilhelm Reich, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, trans. Vincent R. Carfagno (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux 1970), 75ff.

227. On postmortem marriages between German women of Aryan lineage and their fiancés who had died in battle, see Conte and Essner, *La quête de la race*.

228. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 208.

229. Klaus Schwabe and Rolf Reichhardt, eds., *Gerhard Ritter: Ein politischer Historiker in seinen Briefen* (Boppard am Rhein: Harald Boldt-Verlag, 1984), 614. Ritter was a member of the "Freiburger Kreis," the circle of conservatives opposed to the Nazis; he was arrested in 1944.

230. Hugo Ott, "Edmund Husserl und die Universität Freiburg," in *Edmund Husserl und die phänomenologische Bewegung. Zeugnisse in Text und Bild*, ed. Hans Rainer Sepp (Freiburg: Alber, 1988), 95–102.

231. Heidegger, "Bemerkungen zu einigen Verleumdungen, die immer wieder kolportiert werden (1950)," in *Reden und andere Zeugnisse*, 468–9.

232. Heidegger, "Only a God Can Save Us," 52.

233. Heidegger, letter to Malvine Husserl, dated March 6, 1950, *GA* 16, 443.

234. Edith Stein, *Self-Portrait in Letters, 1916–1942* (*The*

Collected Works of Edith Stein, vol. V [Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1993], 275). Heidegger did not neglect to make a sarcastic comment on the many conversions of Jewish students to Christianity in a letter to his wife dated October 1932: "The Jews are now all turning Christian" (*Letters to His Wife*, 140).

235. Hans Jonas, "Husserl and the Problem of Ontology" [in Hebrew], *Mosnajim* 7 (1938): 581–9.

236. Hans Jonas, "Edmund Husserl in Memoriam" [in Hebrew], *Turim* (1938); in a letter to Gershom Scholem dated June 25, 1938, Jonas related that he had "sweated" over the version in Hebrew. See Hans Jonas, *Memoirs*, trans. Krishna Winston (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2008), 273, from which the long quote here is also taken. See also the Gershom Scholem archive at the Jewish National University Library 4º 1599.

237. Karl Löwith, *My Life in Germany Before and After 1933,* trans. Elizabeth King (London and New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1994), 61.

238. Jonas, *Memoirs*, 187. See also Jonas' "Husserl und Heidegger," Leo Baeck Institute Archives, New York, AR 2241/MS 75.

239. Günter Grass, *Dog Years*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Inc., 1989), 325**.**

240. See Dorion Cairns, *Conversations with Husserl and Fink* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1976), 9; and Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1982), vol. I, 352.

241. Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 29.

242. Heidegger, "My Way to Phenomenology," in *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (University of Chicago Press,

2002), 74ff.

243. Ibid.

244. See the letter from Heidegger to his wife written on Pentecost Sunday in 1917: *Letters to His Wife*, 33.

245. "'Phenomenology,' Edmund Husserl's Article for the Encyclopedia Britannica (1927)," trans. Richard E. Palmer, *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 2, 2 (1971): 77–90. For a reconstruction of these events, on the basis of texts, see *Fenomenologia: Storia di un dissidio (1927)*, ed. Renato Cristin (Milan: Unicopli, 1990).

246. See Otto Pöggeler, *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking*, trans. Daniel Magurshak and Sigmund Barber (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities International Press International, 1995), 79. On the subject of *Being and Time*, Heidegger had written to Jaspers: "If the treatise is written *against* anyone, it is against Husserl, who saw this immediately but stayed positive from the very beginning" – Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers, *The Heidegger–Jaspers Correspondence (1920–1963)*, trans. Gary E. Aylesworth, ed. Walter Biemel and Hans Saner (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2003), 73 (Letter 39).

247. Edmund Husserl, "Phänomenologie und Anthropologie," in *Aufsätze und Vorträge (1922–1937), Hurseliana 27,* ed. Thomas Nenon and Hans Rainer Sepp (The Hague: Kluwer, 1988), 164–81. See Heidegger, "Only a God Can Save Us," 48ff. See also Karl Schuhmnn, "Zu Heidegger Spiegel Gespräch über Husserl," *Zejtschrift für philosophische Forschung* 32, 4 (1978): 591–612.

248. Quoted in Jeffrey W. Robbins, *Between Faith and Thought: An Essay on the Ontotheological Condition* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2003), 79.

249. There is a vast amount of literature about the relationship between Husserl and Heidegger, and about the connection between hermeneutics and phenomenology. See Friederike

Rese, ed., *Heidegger und Husserl im Vergleich* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2010); Günter Figal and Hans-Helmut Gander, eds., *Heidegger und Husserl: Neue Perspektiven* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2013). See also Jean-Jacques Courtine, *Heidegger et la phénoménologie* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1990); Jean Grondin, *Le tournant herméneutique de la phénoménologie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2003); Peter Trawny, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish Conspiracy*, trans. Andrew J. Mitchell (University of Chicago Press, 2015), 55–63. An important work on Heidegger's relationship with phenomenology is Jésus Adrián Escudero, *Heidegger and the Emergence of the Question of Being*, trans. Juan Pablo Hernández Betancur (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 86ff.

250. See Heidegger's letter to Elfride dated January 4, 1920: *Letters to His Wife*, 70.

251. Hans-Georg Gadamer, "Phenomenological Movement," in *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, trans. and ed. David E. Linge (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2004), 130–81, 138ff.

252. Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, trans. J. N. Findlay (New York: Routledge, 2008), vol. I, 168.

253. On the theme of intentionality, see Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 22ff., 90ff.

254. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, §7, 26–37.

255. Edmund Husserl, *Briefe an Roman Ingarden* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1968), 42.

256. The letter from Husserl to Ingarden, which is preserved in Husserl's archive, is reproduced in *Martin Heidegger und das Dritte Reich*, ed. Bernd Martin (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1989), 149. In this volume are also published the documents relating to the case that was brought against Heidegger in 1945: "Bericht über das Ergebnis

der Verhandlungen in Beriningungsausshuß vom 11. U. 13. XII 45 (19 Dez. 1945)." In the section entitled "Verhalten gegen Juden" (Conduct against the Jews), a great deal of emphasis is given to Heidegger's relationship with Husserl – along with the cases of rejected doctoral students, from Alfred Seidemann to Helene Weiss. The role of the accuser was played by Walter Eucken, who had been marginalized before 1945 because he was married to a Jewish woman and because he belonged to the Freiburger Kreis. While Heidegger maintained that, for him, "Husserl's Jewish ancestry had not had any significance," Eucken reported that Husserl was convinced that "on account of his anti-Semitism Heidegger had distanced himself from him": Husserl, *Briefe an Roman Ingarden*, 195–6. Heidegger expressed a judgment of Weiss, Eucken, and Constantin von Dietze, another member of the Freiburg Circle – whom he defined as "moralists" – in *Zum Eriegnis – Denken*, GA 73/2 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2013), 1019.

257. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, §24, 37.

258. Ibid.

259. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I–V (Schwarze Hefte 1942–1948)*, ed. Peter Trawny (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2015), 462–3.

260. See Karl Löwith, "Les implications politiques de la philosophie de l'existence de Martin Heidegger," *Les Temps Modernes* 14 (1946): 343–60 (republished in part in *My Life in Germany*, 42, 49).

261. Antonio Gnoli and Franco Volpi, *I prossimi titani: Conversazioni con Ernst Jünger* (Milan: Adelphi, 1997), 28, 48, 83. The correspondence between Jünger and Heidegger was published in German in 2008 and in English in 2016: Martin Heidegger and Ernst Jünger, *Correspondence (1949–1975)*, trans. Timothy Sean Quinn (London and New York: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2016).

262. Ernst Jünger, *Storm of Steel*, trans. Michael Hoffman (New York: Penguin, 2016). For more on Jünger, see Hans

Blumenberg, *Der Mann vom Mond: über Ernst Jünger* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2007).

263. Ernst Jünger, *Der Kampf als inneres Erlebnis* (Berlin: E. S. Mittler & Sohn, 1942).

264. Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, trans. George Schwab (University of Chicago Press, 2007), 94.

265. Walter Benjamin, "Theories of German Fascism: On the Collection of Essays *War and Warrior* edited by Ernst Jünger," trans. Jerolf Wikoff, *New German Critique* 17, Special Walter Benjamin Issue (Spring 1979): 120–8.

266. Ibid., 126, 128. See also Susan Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism," in *Under the Sign of Saturn: Essays* (London: Penguin Books, 2009), 71–105.

267. Even Hannah Arendt evidently misunderstood when she wrote that Jünger had been "an active anti-Nazi from the first to the last day of the regime." See Hannah Arendt, "The Aftermath of Nazi Rule. Report From Germany," 342–53, 348: https://web.stanford.edu/dept/DCL/files/pdf/hannah_aftermath_of_nazi_rule.pdf.

268. Ernst Jünger and Carl Schmitt, *Briefwechsel* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1999), 151–3 (letters from Jünger to Schmitt dated December 10, 23, and 27, 1943); and Ernst Jünger, *Strahlungen* (Tübingen: Heliopolis-Verlang, 1955) (entry dated April 21, 1943).

269. Jünger and Schmitt, *Briefwechsel*, 164 (letter from Schmitt to Jünger dated August 4, 1943).

270. Gnoli and Volpi, *I prossimi titani*, 90–1.

271. Ibid., 96.

272. It should be noted that the extensive Catholic exegesis of the Gospel of St. John dedicates very little space to this verse. In general, the thesis contained in this passage – that is, the salvific role of Israel – is believed to be "passé." Bultmann's position is paradigmatic; for him, these words, irreconcilable

with the text of the Gospel, should be considered "completely or in part an editorial gloss." See Rudolf Bultmann, *Das Evangelium des Johannes* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986 [1941]), 139. For a Jewish interpretation of this verse, which also includes a criticism of Rosenzweig, see Jacob Taubes, "The Issue Between Judaism and Christianity," in *From Cult to Culture: Fragments Towards a Critique of Historical Reason,* trans. and ed. Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert and Amir Engel (Stanford University Press, 2010), 47–9.

273. Léon Bloy, *Le salut par les Juifs* (Paris: Librairie Adrien Demay, 1892), 11, 31.

274. Ernst Jünger, "Die antinationalen Mächte" (1927), in *Politische Publizistik 1919–1933* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2001), 291–6.

275. Ernst Jünger, "Der Nationalismus" (1926), in *Politische Publizistik 1919–1933*, 186–90.

276. Ibid.,187.

277. Ernst Jünger, "Großstadt und Land" (1926), in *Politische Publizistik 1919–1933*, 229–36.

278. Ernst Jünger, "Das Blut" (1926), in *Politische Publizistik 1919–1933*, 191–6.

279. Ibid., 192.

280. It is surprising that in 1930 such a debate could even have been conceived of. Coßmann, who had converted to Catholicism in 1905, had a tendency toward polemics, and loved controversy; thus, he invited fourteen authors to represent the various "parties" – for the Jews, among others, Leo Baeck, Israel Cohen, and Max Naumann; for the Germans and the National Socialists, Theodor Fritsch and Theodor Seibert. But 1930 was a cut-off point.

281. Ernst Jünger, "Über Nationalismus und Jugendfrage" (1930), in *Politische Publizistik 1919–1933*, 587–92. See also Jean-Luc Évard, "Ernst Jünger et les Juifs," *Les Temps Modernes*

589 (1996): 102–30.

282. Jünger, "Über Nationalismus und Jugendfrage," 590.

283. Ibid., 592.

284. Ernst Jünger, "Schlusswort zu einem Aufsatze" (1930), in *Politische Publizistik 1919–1933*, 538–46.

285. Jünger, "Über Nationalismus und Jugendfrage," 592.

286. As Kiesel recognized, Jünger's alternative was inscribed within an "eliminatory anti-Semitism": Helmuth Kiesel, *Ernst Jünger: Eine Biographie* (Munich: Siedler, 2007), 316.

287. Heidegger, "On Ernst Jünger," 393.

288. Ibid.

289. Ibid., 829.

290. Ibid., 47.

291. See Christian von Krockow, *Die Entscheidung: Eine Untersuchung über Ernst Jünger, Carl Schmitt, Martin Heidegger* (Stuttgart: Enke, 1958), 68ff.

292. Ernst Jünger, "Über die Linie," in *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. VII (Stuttgart: Cotta, 2007), 237–80.

293. See Kiesel, *Ernst Jünger*, 543. On the question of National Socialism, see Peter Trawny, "Was is 'Deutschland?' Ernst Jünger's Bedeutung für Martin Heideggers Stellung zum Nationalsozialismus," *Heidegger Jarhbuch: Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus: Interpretationen* 5 (2010): 209–34.

294. See Günter Figal, "Der metaphysische Charakter der Moderne: Ernst Jüngers Schrift Über die Linie (1950) und Martin Heideggers Kritik Über 'Die Linie' (1955)," in *Ernst Jünger im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Hans-Harald Müller and Harro Segeberg (Munich: Fink, 1995), 181–97.

295. Heidegger, *The Question of Being*, trans. Jean T. Wilde and

William Kluback (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 1958), 93.

296. Heidegger, “On Ernst Jünger,” 813. Heidegger spoke in critical terms about Jünger in the *Black Notebooks* starting in 1945. See *Anmerkungen I*, 24, 70.

297. See Françoise Dastur, “Situation du nihilisme: La réponse de Heidegger a Jünger,” in *Heidegger et la pensée à venir* (Paris: Vrin, 2011), 155–69, 164.

298. Helmut Kuhn, “Politik, philosophisch verstanden. Eine Auseinandersetzung mit Carl Schmitts ‘Der Begriff des Politischen’” (1993), in *Des Staat: Eine philosophische Darstellung* (Munich: Kösel, 1967), 447–60; Karl Löwith, “The Occasional Decisionism of Carl Schmitt,” in *Heidegger and European Nihilism*, trans. Gary Steiner (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 271–85; Herbert Marcuse, “The Struggle Against Liberalism in the Totalitarian View of the State,” in *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory*, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (London: MayFlyBooks), 1–31: www.mayflybooks.org; Leo Strauss, *Notes on Carl Schmitt’s “The Concept of the Political,”* trans. Harvey Lomax (2015), 1–26 http://issuu.com/bouvared6/docsd/leoStrauss_-_notes_on_Carl_Schmitt. On Schmitt, see also Carlo Galli, *Janus’s Gaze: Essays on Carl Schmitt*, trans. Amanda Minervini, ed. Adam Sitz (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015).

299. *Heidegger–Jaspers Briefwechsel 1920–1963*, ed. Walter Biernel and Hans Saner (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1992), 272.

300. Heidegger, *Reden und andere Zeugnisse*, 156. See also “Heidegger and Schmitt: A Letter,” *Telos: A Quarterly of Critical Thought* 72 (1987): 132.

301. Jacob Taubes, *The Political Theology of Paul*, trans. Dana Hollander (Stanford University Press, 2008), 70.

302. Gary Ulmen, “Between the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich: Continuity in Carl Schmitt’s Thought,” *Telos* 119 (2001): 18–31, 29. See also Nicolas Tertulian, “Scènes de la vie

philosophique sous le III Reich: Steding, Schmitt, Heidegger," in *Carl Schmitt ou le mythe du politique*, ed. Yves Charles Zarka (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2009), 121–60, 158–9. Although he is not well known, Christoph Steding was one of the most important National Socialist authors. See Christoph Steding, *Das Reich und die Krankheit der europäischen Kultur* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1942).

303. Heidegger, *On Hegel's Philosophy of Right: The 1934–35 Seminar and Interpretive Essays*, trans. Andrew J. Mitchell (New York and London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014).

304. Carl Schmitt, *Ex Captivitate Salus: Experiences, 1945–47* (Cambridge: Polity, 2017), 60.

305. Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, trans. George Schwab (University of Chicago Press, 2007), 29.

306. Ibid., 27ff.

307. See Plato's *Republic*, 470a–471d.

308. Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, 28.

309. Carl Schmitt, "Über das Verhältnis der Begriffe Krieg und Feind," in *Schmitt: Der Begriff des Politischen*, ed. Reinhard Mehring (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2003), 94–102, especially 95ff.

310. Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, 29.

311. Ibid.

312. Jacques Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship*, trans. George Collins (London and New York: Verso, 2006), 84.

313. Ibid., 88.

314. Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, 47.

315. Ibid., 33.

316. Franz Neumann, *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism, 1933–1944* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2009), 45. Forced to emigrate because he was Jewish, Neumann was among the first to attempt to formulate an interpretation of National Socialism.

317. See Caterina Resta, *L'Estraneo: Ostilità e ospitalità nel pensiero del Novecento* (Genoa: Il Nuovo Melangolo, 2008), 36.

318. Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, 34 (italics are mine).

319. Ibid., 27. In the 1933 version, Schmitt corrected *Anderer* to *Andersgearteter* – the other who is different because of his *Art*, his race.

320. Ibid.

321. Ibid., 36–7. Schmitt himself emphasized, in a subsequent note, the importance of taking this step in order to understand his concept of what the enemy was. Zarka indicated that for Schmitt the Jew was the ultimate enemy, whom he defined as "substantial," whereas here I prefer to speak about the eternal, elective enemy. See Yves Charles Zarka, *Un détail nazi dans la pensée de Carl Schmitt* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2005).

322. Carl Schmitt, *Glossarium Aufzeichnungen der Jahre 1947–1951* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1991), 18. Cited in John P. McCormick, ed., *Confronting Mass Democracy and Industrial Technology: Political and Social Theory from Nietzsche to Habermas* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 178.

323. Carl Schmitt, "Das Judentum in der Rechtswissenschaft," in *Ansprachen, Vorträge und Ergebnisse der Tagung der Reichsgruppe Hochschullehrer des NSRB am 3. und 4. Oktober 1936* (Berlin: Deutscher Rechts-Verlag, 1936), 34.

324. Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship*, 83.

325. Jacob Taubes, *To Carl Schmitt: Letters and Reflections*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 15.

326. Carl Schmitt, *Über die drei Arten des rechtswissenschaftlichen Denkens* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2006), 15.

327. Carl Schmitt, "State, Movement, People: The Triadic Structure of Political Unity," in *State, Movement, People, The Triadic Structure of Political Unity; The Question of Legality*, trans. Simona Draghici (Corvallis, OR: Plutarch Press, 2001), 3–54.

328. Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, 54.

329. Schmitt, *Über die drei Arten des rechtswissenschaftlichen Denkens*, 9–10.

330. In Hebrew, "Torah" means "teaching." Among the most theologically significant passages of the New Testament is Matthew 5: 17, where Jesus says: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law [*tòn nómon*], or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill [*allà plerôsai*]." The Greek *nomos* evidently refers here to the Torah. Thus, in reality, what Jesus was saying was "I am come to fulfill the Torah" – not to take it away.

331. See Carl Schmitt, "Appropriation/Distribution/Production: An Attempt to Determine from *Nomos* the Basic Questions of Every Social and Economic Order," in *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum*, trans. G. L. Ulmen (New York: Telos Press, 2003), 336–50, 345. On this theme, see also Giacomo Marramao, *The Passage West: Philosophy after the Age of the Nation State*, trans. Matteo Mandarini (London: Verso, 2012), ch. 4, "The Exile of the Nomos: Carl Schmitt and the *globale Zeit*."

332. Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth*, 75.

333. Hegel expressed himself in a similar way. See chapter II, section 4, above.

334. On this topic, I take the liberty of citing my book: Donatella Di Cesare, *Israele: Terra, ritorno, anarchia* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2014).

335. Carl Schmitt, *Völkerrechtliche Grossraumordnung* (Berlin: Dunker & Humblot, 1991), 9. See also Friedrich Ratzel, *Der Lebensraum: Eine biographische Studie* (Darmstadt: Buchgesellschaft, 1966 [1901]), 67ff.

336. Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. George Schwab (University of Chicago Press, 2010), 5.

337. Carl Schmitt, "The Führer Protects the Law," 2: http://docslide.us/documents/carl-schmitt-fuehrer-protects-the-law.html.

338. On this theme, see Giorgio Agamben, *Stato d'eccezione* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2003).

339. If the freedom of God with regard to the laws of Nature is expressed in miracles, is it possible to speak of a miracle in the case of the "sovereign" who decides the state of exception?

340. "What the new Nomos commands recalls (should recall?) the words in the Gospel of John, 13, 34: 'A new command I give you [*entolèn kainèn dídomi*]'": Jacob Taubes, "Letter to Armin Mohler," in *To Carl Schmitt: Letters and Reflections*, 19ff. See also Armin Mohler, *Die conservative Revolution in Deutschland, 1918–1932: Ein Handbuch* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1989).

341. Schmitt, "The Constitution of Freedom," 324.

342. Carl Schmitt, "German Jurisprudence in Its Struggle Against the Jewish Spirit," in *Carl Schmitt's "Jews in Jurisprudence,"* trans. Tomislav Sunk: https://archive.org/details/CarlSchmittsjewsInJurisprudence, 2.

343. In Book V of *The Brothers Karamazov*, the character of

Ivan explains his poem "The Grand Inquisitor." See Carl Schmitt, *Roman Catholicism and Political Form*, trans. G. L. Ulman (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1996), 32. On the theme of Schmitt and the Roman Inquisitor, see the observations made by Taubes in *To Carl Schmitt: Letters and Reflections*, 7.

344. Carl Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes: Meaning and Failure of a Political Symbol*, trans. George Schwab (University of Chicago Press, 2008), 7ff., 35ff.

345. Ibid., 8ff.

346. Carl Schmitt, *Land and Sea: A World-Historical Meditation*, trans. Samuel Garrett Zeitlin (Candor, NY: Telos Press Publishing, 2015), 14.

347. *Talmud Baba Batra* 74b. The legend according to which God played with the Leviathan for three hours every day comes from an ancient *haggadah.* See Louis Ginzberg, "Bible Times and Characters from the Creation to Jacob: The Creation of the Word, The Fifth Day," in *The Legends of the Jews*, trans. Henrietta Szold (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1913) vol. I, ch. 1.

348. See Heinrich Heine, *Jewish Stories and Hebrew Melodies*, trans. Hal Draper (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, Inc., 1987), 140–1. The Jewish hymn, which was sung in German synagogues during the *Shavuot* holiday, must have been well known to Heine, who had had a traditional Jewish education. See also *Sepher Kruwot, Machsor Lechag Haschawuot*, Hamburg 5599(= 1838), 108–19.

349. Schmitt's source was the notorious anti-Semitic text written by Andreas Eisenmenger, *Entdecktes Judentum*, published in 1711, to which in fact he referred in a note. See Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes*, 8. See also Paul Bookbinder, "Carl Schmitt, 'Der Leviathan,' and the Jews," *International Social Science Review* 66, 3 (1991):

99–109.

350. Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes*, 8.

351. See Gross, *Carl Schmitt and the Jews*, 223ff.

352. The second epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, along with the Book of Daniel 7–12, the revelations of John 13–17, and Matthew 24, constitute the main part of the biblical canon on the end of time, the Antichrist, and the Parousia, to which numerous Christian doctrines adhere. For a stimulating recent interpretation, see Massimo Cacciari, *Il potere che frena* (Milan: Adelphi, 2013). See also Cacciari, *Dell'Inizio* (Milan: Adelphi, 2001), 621–38; and Cacciari, *Geofilosofia dell'Europa* (Milan: Adelphi, 2008), 117ff.

353. Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth*, 245. In German, the word *Reich* has an ambiguous value; it can refer to both the Third Reich and the Roman empire.

354. Jacob Taubes, "Carl Schmitt: Apocalyptic Prophet of the Counterrevolution," in *To Carl Schmitt: Letters and Reflections*, 1–18, 13.

355. See Donatella Di Cesare, "Grammar of Messianic Times," *Naharaim: Zeitschrift für deutsch-jüdische Literatur und Kulturgeschichte* 5, 1–2 (2011): 55–95.

356. Taubes, "Carl Schmitt: Apocalyptic Prophet of the Counterrevolution," 13.

357. Ibid.

358. See Joseph W. Bendersky, "Carl Schmitt's Path to Nuremberg: A Sixty-Year Reassessment," *Telos* 139 (2007): 6–34. See also Joseph W. Bendersky, "Carl Schmitt at Nuremberg," *Telos* 72 (1987): 91–6; and, in the same issue, "Interrogation of Carl Schmitt by Robert Kempner," 97–129.

359. Carl Schmitt, *Briefwechsel mit einem Seiner Schüler*, ed. Armin Mohler (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1995), 95. Cited in

Gross, *Carl Schmitt and the Jews*, 204.

360. In fact, the book that Schmitt wrote while he was in prison is entitled *Ex Captivitate Salus*. Here Schmitt was making an explicit reference to Bloy, whose book he had mentioned in a letter to Jünger dated August 4, 1943. See Schmitt, *Ex Captivitate Salus*; see also Jünger and Schmitt, *Briefwechsel*, 164.

361. Schmitt, *Glossarium: Aufzeichnungen aus den Jahren 1947 bis 1958*, 404.

362. Ibid., 91.

363. Ibid., 417–18. Simon bar Kokhba (which in Aramaic means Son of the Star, according to the prophecy in the Book of Numbers 24: 17) had led the third war of the Israelites against the Roman empire, which marked the definitive defeat of Israel. See Marcel Simon, *Verus Israel: A Study of the Relations between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire (135–425)*, trans. Henry McKeating (Oxford University Press, 1986).

364. Unfortunately, in Faye's prolix exposition many distinctions are confused, and the difference between Heidegger and Schmitt becomes blurred. See Faye, *Heidegger, the Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy*, 130ff., 151ff., 173ff., 183ff.

365. Heidegger, *On Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, 186. See also the similar reference in Heidegger, *Seminare Hegel–Schilling: Manuskripte, Protokolle und Mitschriften zu Seminaren von 1927 bis 1957*, ed. Peter Trawny (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2011), 608ff.: "recently the essence of the political has been indicated in the friend-enemy relationship."

366. Heidegger, *Seminare Hegel–Schilling*, 608ff.

367. Ibid. (italics are mine).

368. Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister*," trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996), 85.

369. Ibid., 82. See also Francesco Fistetti, *Heidegger e l'utopia della polis* (Genoa: Marietti, 1999), 25ff.

370. Heidegger, *Parmenides*, trans. André Schuwer and Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 43 (italics are mine).

371. Ibid., 44.

372. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 170.

373. Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister,"* 94.

374. See Gregory Fried, *Heidegger's Polemos: From Being to Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000). See also Christopher Rickey, *Revolutionary Saints: Heidegger, National Socialism, and Antinomian Politics* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 256ff.

375. Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 73.

376. Ibid.

377. Schmitt, "German Jurisprudence in Its Struggle Against the Jewish Spirit," 6.

378. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, §79, 104.

379. Ibid., §82, 107.

380. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §33, 23; §59, 43.

381. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, §153, 45.

382. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §47, 254.

383. Ibid., §46a, 253.

384. See Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 73.

385. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton University Press, 1989), Book Two, 605; Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, 35. See also George Schwab, *The Challenge of the Exception: An Introduction*

to the Political Ideas of Carl Schmitt between 1921 and 1936 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1989).

386. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, §114, 110.

387. Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics," in *The End of Philosophy*, 84ff.

388. Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship*, 246ff.

389. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §9, 146–7.

390. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 68.

391. See Jacques Derrida, "Heidegger's Ear: Philopolemology," trans. John P. Leavey, Jr., in *Reading Heidegger: Commemorations*, ed. John Salis (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), 202.

392. Ibid., 204.

393. On this topic, see also Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 39.

394. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §49, 254–5.

395. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, §21, 34.

396. Ibid., 144.

397. Klemperer, *Language of the Third Reich*, 182.

398. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 104, 191, 207–8.

399. Pascal David puts forth the bizarre, totally inconsistent theory that *Weltjudentum* is a neutral term in his *Essai sur Heidegger et le Judaïsme: le nom et le nombre* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 2015), 239–40.

400. Karl Jaspers, *Philosophische Autobiographie* (Munich: Piper, 1984), 101. See also David Farrell Krell, "The Heidegger–Jaspers Relationship," *Journal of the British Society of Phenomenology* 9, 2 (1978): 126.

401. Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide: The Myth of the*

Jewish World Conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion (London: Serif, 2006). It is perhaps not by chance that this myth was depicted in the most linear way by the famous cartoonist Will Eisner. See Will Eisner, *The Plot: The Secret Story of "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion"* (London: W. W. Norton & Co., 2006).

402. See Cesare G. De Michelis, *The Non-Existent Manuscript: A Study of the Protocols of the Sages of Zion*, trans. Richard Newhouse (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004).

403. On the diffusion of this book in Russia, see Cesare G. De Michelis, *La giudeofobia in Russia: dal Libro del "Kahal" ai Protocolli dei savi di Sion* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2001).

404. Serei Aleksandrovich Nilus, *Bliz est, pri dverekh. . .* [*It is close to the door*] (Moscow: Sergiev Posad, 1917), 88.

405. "Auf Vorposten" means "At the Outposts." The publishing house was part of the Verband gegen die Überhebung des Judentums (Union against the Arrogance of Judaism).

406. Wolfgang Benz, *Die Protokolle der Weisen von Zion: die Legende von der jüdischen Weltverschwörung* (Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2011), 71.

407. Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution, 1933–1939* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997), 94–5.

408. See Pierre-André Taguieff, *L'imaginaire du complot mondial: Aspects d'un mythe moderne* (Paris: Éditions Mille et Une Nuits, 2012), 333–4.

409. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 423–4.

410. Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, trans. Katherine Jones (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1939), 107–8.

411. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Cleveland and New York: Meridian Books, 1962), 360.

412. Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide*, 291ff.

413. See Jacob Rogozinski, "Hell on Earth: Hannah Arendt in the Face of Hitler," in *Law and Evil: Philosophy, Politics, Psychoanalysis*, ed. Ari Hirvonen and Janne Portikkivi (London: Routledge, 2010), 257–74.

414. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, §18, 32.

415. Ibid.

416. Ibid., §101, 104.

417. Ibid., §101, 103–4.

418. Ibid., §73, 88.

419. For that matter, Hegel had said that the Jews always won without waging war. See chapter II, section 4, above.

420. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 208.

421. Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*, 44.

422. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, in *The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Francis Golffing (New York: Doubleday, 1956), §7, §10. See also chapter II, section 5, above.

423. Hans-Helmuth Knütter, *Die Juden und die deutsche Linke in der Weimarer Republik 1918–1933* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1971), 118ff.

424. On this theme, see Michael Löwy, *Redemption and Utopia: Jewish Libertarian Thought in Central Europe: A Study in Elective Affinity*, trans. Hope Heaney (London: Verso Books, 2017), and Löwy, *Juifs hétérodoxes: Messianisme, romantisme, utopie* (Paris: Éclat, 2010).

425. Thomas Mann, "Against Justice and Truth," in *Reflections of a Nonpolitical Man*, trans. Walter D. Morris (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Company, 1983), 133.

426. Otto Spengler, *Preußentum und Sozialismus* (Munich: Beck, 1919), 97.

427. This work, which is one of the chief sources of Nazi ideology, was singled out by Ernst Nolte, "Eine frühe Quelle zu Hitlers Antisemitismus," *Historische Zeitschrift* 192 (1961): 585–606. Nolte's thesis, according to which Nazism was the only possible response to the red threat, was informed by Judeo-Bolshevism, which he believed showed how the threat was the Jews, not political Bolshevism. See also Ernst Nolte, *Der europäische Bürgerkrieg, 1917–1945: Nationalsozialismus und Bolschewismus* (Munich: Herbig, 2000).

428. Dietrich Eckart, *Bolshevism from Moses to Lenin: A Dialogue Between Adolph Hitler and Me*, trans. William Pierce: www.jrbooksonline.com/pdf_books/bolshevism_from_moses_to_lenin.pdf, 3.

429. Ibid., 13.

430. Ibid., 16.

431. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 84.

432. Here Eckart was writing in the anti-Semitic periodical *Auf gut deutsch*, 9/10 (1919): 81.

433. Alfred Rosenberg, "Der jüdischer Bolschewismus," in Dietrich Eckart, *Totengräber Russlands* (Munich: Deutscher Volks-Verlag, 1921), 3. This anti-Semitic text was published as a pamphlet in English in the early 1920s: Alfred Rosenberg and Ernst Boepple, *The Jewish Bolshevism* (London: Britons Publishing Society, 1923).

434. *Hitler: Reden und Proklamationen 1932–1945*, ed. M. Domarus (Würzburg: Schmidt, 1962–3), vol. II, 1328.

435. See Jäckel, *Hitler's World View*, 38.

436. See Burrin, *Nazi Anti-Semitism: From Prejudice to the Holocaust*.

437. Joseph Goebbels, *The Goebbels Diaries: 1939–1941*, trans. Fred Taylor (New York: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1984), 413–15.

438. Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, 129ff.

439. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 190.

440. Ibid.

441. Ibid., 191.

442. A complex figure belonging to the Trotskyite left, Radek, after being sent to a labor camp, was killed in 1939, during the period of great repression, at the time when Heidegger was writing. See Warren Lerner, *Karl Radek: The Last Internationalist* (Stanford University Press, 1970).

443. Eckart, *Totengräber Russlands*, 6.

444. A very important excursus in the *History of Beyng* is dedicated to this concept, as is a passage in the *Black Notebooks*. See Heidegger, *History of Beyng*, 169ff.; and *Ponderings XII–XV*, §§125–40, 115–26. He also returned to the subject of Leninism in *Parmenides*, 86.

445. Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, §67, 255–6. On the complex concept of "secularization," see Giacomo Marramao, *Potere e secolarizzazione: Le categorie del tempo* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2005).

446. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, §25, 37.

447. Ibid., §73, 85–6. Not far from this is the position taken by Waldemar Gurian, *Der Bolschwismus* (Freiburg: Herder, 1931). It is possible that Heidegger knew the work of Gurian, an Armenian Jew born in St. Petersburg; he was baptized as a child along with his mother, and later lived in Germany, where he studied philosophy and had a close relationship with Carl Schmitt. One of the first interpreters of totalitarianism, Gurian was forced to emigrate to the United States. See Waldemar Gurian, *Bolshevism: Theory and Practice*, trans. E. I.

Watkin (London: Sheed & Ward, 1932). For more on Gurian, one of the figures who illuminated those dark times, see Hannah Arendt, “Waldemar Gurian 1903–1954,” first published in the *Review of Politics*, which had been founded by Gurian, and later included in Arendt’s collection of essays *Men in Dark Times* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1968), 251–62.

448. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, §73, 86–8; §90, 99.

449. Ibid., §73, 86.

450. Ibid.

451. Ibid., §103, 104.

452. Ibid., §125, 115; §179, 218–19.

453. Ibid., 185. On the potential role of England, also in an anti-Semitic sense, see ibid., 114.

454. Ibid., 191.

455. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §5, 76.

456. See Donatella di Cesare, *Utopia del comprendere* (Genoa: Il Melangolo, 2003), 141ff.

457. See chapter II, sections 3–4, above.

458. Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, trans. Barbara E. Galli (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 319.

459. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, §12, 55.

460. Ibid., §12, 78.

461. Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, §42, 176ff.

462. Derrida, *Of Spirit*, 56.

463. Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 196.

464. Ibid., 197.

465. Ibid., 236.

466. See chapter II, section 4 above. In Judaism, the stone, *even*, has a very broad symbology in which, along with eternity and memory – memory of the Temple, homage to the dead – it indicates – from *av* and *ben*, father and son – tradition, the continuity of generations, the continuation of history, life.

467. Plato, *Theaetus*, 146 c-3 (italics are mine).

468. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books: Preliminary Studies for the "Philosophical Investigations,"* trans. Peter Docherty (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2008), 17–18; Wittgenstein, *Zettel*, trans. Gertrude Elizabeth Margaret Anscombe (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), §444; Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. P. M. S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2010), §92.

469. Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books*, 18.

470. *Carl Schmitt's "Jews in Jurisprudence,"* 6.

471. See Trawny, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish World Conspiracy*, 24. In this sense I agree with Jean-Luc Nancy, who speaks about "banality," but only insofar as banality is superseded by an anti-Semitism that has a philosophical connotation. See Jean-Luc Nancy, "Heideggers Banalität," in *Heidegger, die Juden, noch einmal*, ed. Peter Trawny (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2015), 12–42, in particular 30.

472. It is not by chance that – as we have seen – for Heidegger, biologism fell back on metaphysics. Vice versa, the danger is of underrating the relevance of metaphysical anti-Semitism, as, for example, we see in the writings of Vietta, who sees merely a *Judenkritik* – a criticism of the Jews – in the *Black Notebooks*. See Silvio Vietta, "'Etwas rast um den Erdball. . .,'" in *Martin Heidegger: Ambivalente Existenz und*

Globalisierungskritik (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2015), 169ff.

473. Waldemar Gurian, *Um des Reiches Zukunft* (Freiburg: Herder, 1932), 77. We must presume that Heidegger was familiar with this work, as he was with Gurian's work on Bolshevism.

474. For example, in the chapter "Die Gegengründig des nachchristichen Judentums," in *Die Erhebung Israels gegen die christlichen Güter* (Hamburg and Berlin: Hanseatischer Verlagsanstalt, 1931), 87–138. See also Blüher's return to both the theme of lying and the apocalyptic scenario in *Secessio Judaica: Philosophische Gründung der historischen Situation de Judentums und der antisemitischen Bewegung* (Berlin: De Weisse Ritter, 1922), 19ff.

475. Any philosophy that even today pretends to be autonomous should reflect on this connection with Christian theology.

476. Jean-François Lyotard, *Heidegger and "the Jews,"* trans. Andreas Michel and Mark S. Roberts (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990).

477. Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI*, §46a, 253ff.

478. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 187.

479. Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?" trans. Miles Groth: https://wagner.edu/psychology/files/2013/01/Heidegger-What-Is-Metaphysics-Translation-GROTH.pdf, 28.

480. Ibid., 36.

481. Ibid., 54.

482. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1009a31.

483. We can assume that the works of both Meister Eckhart and Jakob Böhme played a significant role for Heidegger.

484. See Gershom Scholem, "*Schöpfung aus Nichts und Selbstverschränkung Gottes*," in *Über einige*

Grundbegriffe des Judentums (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1970), 53–89, 85ff. See also Alexandre Safran, *The Kabbalah: Law and Mysticism in the Jewish Tradition*, trans. Margaret A. Pater (New York: Feldheim, 1997).

485. Heidegger, *Letter on "Humanism,"* 273.

486. Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Three and Four*, 242.

487. Ibid., 6.2, 229. Heidegger also wrote elsewhere (e.g., in *Being and Truth* and *Mindfulness*) about *Vernichtung* in this sense.

488. Jacob Taubes, "Vom Adverb 'Nichts' zum Substantiv 'das Nichts': Überlegungen zu Heideggers Frage nach dem Nichts," in *Positionen der Negativität: Poetik und Hermeneutik VII*, ed. Harald Weinrich (Munich: Fink, 1975), 141–53.

IV
AFTER AUSCHWITZ

One can forgive many Germans, but there are some Germans it is difficult to forgive. It is difficult to forgive Heidegger.[1]

No "revolution" is "revolutionary" enough.[2]

1 *Bellum judaicum*

During the years of the Shoah, it was the "emigrés" who deciphered the first signs of what had happened and what was still happening; but only a very small number of them actually intuited the enormity of the extermination. They were German Jews, refugees, stateless persons, members of the intelligentsia who were able, as Mannheim had maintained, to have a broader perspective because of their extraterritoriality. They came from the "hidden tradition" of modern Judaism – the Judaism of the pariahs, of the "legal and political outlaws."[3] They treasured their exile, aware of that great privilege of the Jewish people – the acosmia or "worldlessness" that is accompanied by a much more profound sense of humanity.[4] They were not illuminists; they did not share the myth of progress – rather, they read history as an uninterrupted series of catastrophes, an accumulation of rubble piling up to the heavens beneath the gaze of Walter Benjamin's Angel of History. These Jews believed that barbarism was the hidden side of modernity; they were exponents of a "romantic anti-capitalism" and of a libertarian political thinking.[5] They were Heidegger's pupils.

Above all, they wondered about what was happening in Europe – that unprecedented war that the Nazis were waging against the Jews. What was it? When had it been declared? And why? They took Nazism not as a people's propaganda, nor as a passing folly. Levinas had already spoken about a "philosophy of Hitlerism," an idolatry of Nature, a form of paganism according to which man should be ready to accept the facticity of his own existence as historical destiny.[6]

Toward the end of the 1930s, the planetary war took on increasingly clear contours, unfolding as a theological-political clash between paganism and Judaism. Taubes and Jonas in particular saw the war in this way, albeit with different accents and intentions. Both came from a background of theological studies; they had explored the phenomena of the gnosis and the apocalypse; they knew that the ferocious attack of the Third Reich did not fit into the old schemas of the nineteenth century; they knew that it could not be compared to a persecution or a pogrom, because it was an event without precedents. And yet they inscribed it within Jewish history; they sought its precedents by turning their gaze backward through the centuries, toward that great Shoah in which Israel had been defeated by Rome, in which the *Imperium* had prevailed, decreeing the scattering and the exile of the Jewish people. Both Taubes and Jonas spoke of a *bellum judaicum*, with an explicit reference to Flavius Josephus.7 The pages of Taubes' *Occidental Eschatology*, published in 1947, can be read in the light of this clash, in which the ultimate apocalypse was interpreted as the war between the Third Reich and Israel.8

Jonas had written a thesis on *Gnosticism and the Spirit of Late Antiquity* when he was studying with Heidegger in Marburg.9 Not without regrets, he left Germany and reached Haifa in the Spring of 1935. And it was precisely that work of his, midway between philosophy and theology, that enabled Jonas to perceive what others did not see: the trait that the phenomenon of gnosis and the philosophy of Heidegger shared was cosmic nihilism.10 Jonas intuited that the nihilistic basis of Nazi paganism would have led to a total annihilation of the Jewish people. It was a new *bellum judaicum*. The war that Nazi Germany was waging against Israel was targeted at a people who had neither state nor army, who were not in a position to defend themselves, who in many cases were not even aware that they had been chosen as the absolute enemy of the Third Reich.

In September 1939, Jonas made an appeal to all Jewish emigrés to fight against Hitler's Germany: "this is our hour, this is our war."11 He almost went so far as to claim for the Jewish people "a right and a duty of primogeniture" over that conflict – because if the Third Reich were to win the war, it would not allow a single

Jew to survive. The Germans would not leave any place in the world for their metaphysical enemy. Jonas understood the difference between the condition of the Jews and that of other peoples:

> they are threatened in one aspect of their being on earth, however significant, whereas in our case the Nazi principle, which aspires to impose itself on the entire world, strikes at the heart of our human dignity and, at the same time, at the very possibility of our existence on earth. We are the Nazis' metaphysical enemy, their designated victim from the very first day, and we shall know no peace until either that principle or our own people is no more. For us, therefore, it is not a part but the whole that is at issue. Directed against us is truly *total war* [. . .] If today there existed a Jewish state, it would have had to be the first to declare war against Hitler's Germany.12

The novelty of the political program of the Nazis did not escape Jonas. For the first time in history, a refashioning of humanity was being aimed at. This distinguished the new *bellum judaicum* from the ancient one – because Rome had allowed a politically defeated Judaism to continue to survive. This would not happen "under the heel of the Gestapo."13 The Jew, who, condemned by the metaphysical death sentence, fell outside of Being, not only was no longer a citizen of Germany; he could no longer have any place in the world. The liquidation of the Jews was already announced in that sentence.

Thus, for the Jews, it was "a 'bellum judaicum' in the truest sense of the word – the first war of our existence as a State." And upon close consideration, it was also "the first religious war of modern times," with the Third Reich on one side and Israel on the other; paganism on one side, and on the other Judaism and that "Jewification of European humanity" that was in fact Christianity.14

Jonas followed his words with actions. For almost seven years, he served in the Jewish Infantry Brigade Group, and, having crossed through Italy, he entered Germany in 1945. Subsequently, with the weapons of philosophy, he continued to fight Nazism and its pagan contempt for humanity. And in his own way, he also fought with

Heidegger. He never forgave his former teacher, the precursor who had discovered “alien ground.” Their only encounter after the war, in 1969, was a bitter disappointment for Jonas: “what had come between us would remain in silence for good.”[15]

2 To Abdicate to Silence?

Post-Nazi Germany was a country that attempted to reconstruct its own identity upon the ruins of defeat – therefore under the banner of continuity as well as of forgetting. Amnesia and amnesty were the two key words during those years. The Cold War and the Iron Curtain favored the image of a new Germany – a Western, decisive link to NATO, the last bulwark of the free world. The theory of the two forms of totalitarianism, the debatable symmetry between Nazism and communism, contributed to the Germans divesting themselves of any political responsibility – carrying them, in fact, to the shore where the victims were. Bent over the ruins of their cities, intent upon resolving the drama of the more than 10 million fellow citizens who had been deported from the Eastern *Länder* and put into forced labor by the Red Army, the Germans convinced themselves that they were the real victims, whom the story told by others refused to recognize. The sense of collective innocence of the German people marked their return to normalcy. In the story of her journey to Germany after the war, published in 1950, Hannah Arendt wrote:

> The average German looks for the causes of the last war not in the acts of the Nazi Regime but in the events that led to the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise. Such an escape from reality is also, of course, an escape from responsibility.[16]

Eliminated from the body of the German nation, the Jews were perceived as an absence that was still too present and vexatious. In a brief essay written in 1963, Ernst Bloch decried the paradox of an anti-Semitism without Jews. In the *bellum judaicum*, the Nazis had been victorious up to the end – it was “their only success.”[17] In spite of this, in spite of the “monstrosities” committed as part of the Final Solution, even “lacking any Jews,” the “Jewish question” still remained. It surfaced in a singular form of repentance – mention of the cause of which was deliberately

avoided – as well as in negation and de-negation: "here everyone pretends not to have known anything" – and in that disturbing regret for not having gone all the way, which was expressed in a new accusation, according to which "the Jews, poisoners of wells, had dropped the atom bomb."[18]

Between the sepulchral silence of the victims and the deafening silence of the persecutors, there seemed to be no place for Auschwitz – a forbidden name, an unmentionable phantom. Nor was it clear what distinguished what had happened at Auschwitz from all the other unmentionable crimes that had been committed during those years.

It was in this context that Heidegger's own silence, profound and impenetrable, seemed to descend. Those who, especially outside of Germany, were expecting from him at least a sign, a word – if not an explicit condemnation of what had happened – were destined to remain disappointed. Above all, his former students were clamoring for a sign from him. In 1947, Herbert Marcuse wrote to Heidegger from the United States, trying to convince him to intervene publicly.[19] But in spite of numerous requests, Heidegger remained immovable.

The legendary interview that Heidegger granted to *Der Spiegel* on September 23, 1966, which was not published until after his death in 1976, as had been agreed upon, did not open a crack in the wall of silence. Heidegger responded to the questions, which appear to have been given to him ahead of time, with the utmost ease.[20] All in all, in that interview Heidegger kept up the defensive strategy that he had implemented from the very beginning: on the one hand, he recognized, in a very cautious way, his own involvement – "I believed then that in my encounter with National Socialism a way could be opened, the only possible way" – without admitting that that had been for him the path to revolution, the epochal event of Being, a philosophical path more than a political one; on the other hand, Heidegger did not attempt to pass himself off as a late-blooming democrat – he did not believe in, nor had he ever believed in, democracy – much less in the "technological age."[21] Even in the last pages that he wrote, Heidegger spoke of "the destiny of the Germans," but he did not speak about any responsibility on their part.[22] Not even one syllable about the extermination. Nothing.

Articles and books have been written about “Heidegger’s silence,” which has become a *topos* in the world of philosophy. The discussion, involving discordant voices, has become protracted over the years. Lyotard observed that the “philosopher of Todtnauberg” maintained until the very end a “hermetically sealed, leaden silence.”[23] For Lacoue-Labarth, Heidegger’s was an “unpardonable” silence, because he could have spoken, but did not, leaving the question still open.[24] Many recognized in Heidegger’s obstinate silence after 1945 a sin that was worse than his registration in the Nazi party in 1933. This is, for example, the position taken by George Steiner, who, while he reserved harsh words for Heidegger’s followers who faithfully remained silent, wondered how it was possible to reconcile that silence with the “lyric humanity of Heidegger’s later writings.”[25] This theme was also taken up by Richard Bernstein, for whom Heidegger’s silence was “resounding, deafening and damning.”[26]

The *Black Notebooks*, however, shed light on this silence. Certainly, Heidegger’s metaphysical anti-Semitism must have contributed to his silence in a decisive way. In that context, his choice seems more understandable. And it is valid then to ask again: What was Heidegger’s silence? This question in turn raises two other questions – about the concept of “silence” in Heidegger’s thinking, and his silence in the years immediately after the Shoah. This necessitates speaking of the ban imposed by Adorno on poets, as well as the encounter between Celan and Heidegger.

While poets were attempting to articulate with their verses the silence of those who had been snuffed out, while historians were gathering evidence of the extermination, and jurists were dealing with crimes that seemed to go beyond any punishment, the philosophers were silent, impotent, and aphasic in the face of what had happened. That aphasia attested to an open wound in philosophy. The “gaping pit” opened up by the Shoah seemed to be unbridgeable.[27] To the difficulty of the imagination paralyzed by the enormity of the monstrous things that had happened was added the difficulty of the struggle to pass from the narrative dimension of memory to the philosophical dimension of conceptualization. Reflection on evil assailed philosophy, which was increasingly aware of being directly called to account by the

tribunal of history. If the philosophers were not sitting in the docks with the accused at the Nuremberg trials, the Nuremberg of philosophy was under worldwide scrutiny. This is why the Shoah remained outside of philosophical discourse for so long.[28] Anyone who attempted to explain everything by indicating causes and connections, in order for light to triumph over darkness once again, was opposed by those who saw in Auschwitz an unplumbable, incomprehensible, unspeakable enigma.

Upon his return from exile in America, Adorno was among the first to break the silence, but he did so in order to paradoxically repropose silence with a philosophical verdict: "To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric."[29] The critic, in the "guise of the accuser," and therefore also the poet, would end up being an accomplice to the horror, sublimating it, contributing to the "weaving of the veil."[30] Adorno's allusion to Heidegger was not at all veiled; he was clearly in Adorno's sights. But Adorno's essay, written in 1949 and published in 1951, lent itself to many misunderstandings, and the verdict ended up being the fetish of the unrepresentability of Auschwitz. Reactions were quick to come: not only did poets and writers have their say, but also philosophers, like Günter Anders.[31]

In Germany, there was already resonating an elegy, which, in its terrible beauty, spoke about the night in a crystalline way: it was Paul Celan's poem "Todesfuge." With a hammering, implacable rhythm, Celan's verses unfold in a paroxystic dance that recalls the music of the orchestras in the lagers. They offer the rhythmic score of a refrain that contrasts the "golden hair" of Margarete with the "ashen hair" of Shulamit, Goethe with the *Shir haShirim*, the Song of Songs – with Heine in the middle.[32] It was the tragic end of German Judaism, repeated to obsession.

Was Adorno thinking about Celan's "Death Fugue" when he formulated his lapidary verdict? Celan was sure of it, but he was profoundly disappointed. He had placed great hopes in that philosopher; he saw in Adorno the friend of Benjamin and Scholem, with whom he hoped to enter into an alliance in order to guard against the fading of the German memory. Above all, he expected that Adorno would write a book about his work – a book that Adorno never wrote, because he remained a stranger to Celan's poetry; he did not understand Celan's political calling, the

overturning of Celan's own ban, which later Peter Szondi would interpret in this way: "the evocation of the death camps is not only the end of Celan's poetry, but its precondition."[33]

Celan's relationship with Adorno turned out to be not only disappointing, but also unfortunate. Adorno seemed to have concealed even his father's last name, Wisengrund – the little bit of Jewishness that he still had. Celan's reproach for that suppression resounds in the poem he wrote in 1965, "Mutter, Mutter," in which the new aggressors are described as writing "in the name and in the names of the in-humanity," and they write not *ab-[gründig]*, but rather *wiesen-gründig*, not "in a Heideggerian abyss," but "in an Adornian valley."[34]

For that matter, what could Celan have had in common with the man who had written *The Jargon of Authenticity*?[35] What distanced Celan from Adorno was precisely what brought him close to Heidegger: language. How to say the ineffable? After Auschwitz, this was the question. How to articulate "the Majesty of the absurd," without falling into a banalizing sublimation, but also without relegating it to a dangerous mysticism of nothingness?

Celan was caught between two very different silences: on one side was the silence of Adorno, who imposed silence on the poet, and on the other side was the silence of Heidegger, enigmatic and obstinate.

In Celan's library, the catalogue of which was published in 2004, there were thirty-three volumes by Heidegger, all filled with annotations.[36] In those texts, Celan had sought not only reflections on poetry, but also the connection between language and silence: "to keep silent does not mean to be dumb," because "to be able to keep silent, Dasein must have something to say."[37] Already in *Being and Time*, Heidegger had maintained that being silent was a constitutive part of discourse, one of its possibilities. Several times subsequently, he indicated silence as the source of language. And he distinguished between the silence of reticence, *Verschweigen*, and passing over in silence, *Erschweigen*, which kept something un-said, leaving it open, entrusting it to the words of others.[38]

Celan had annotated many words in his copy of *Being and Time*. He was struck by the word *Verlautbarung*, which means to utter, to translate into sounds.39 He had found his own world condensed in that word. Among other things, Celan had in common with Heidegger the aspiration to emerge where language plunges into the abyss of silence – in order to get beyond that abyss. The path trodden by Heidegger seemed to disclose to Celan the way out, the passage through the "bottleneck." For Celan, however, it was not a matter of going back to the beginning, but rather of exposing the wound, articulating the death rattle in which the victims ran the risk of suffocating forever. In this consisted Celan's hand-to-hand combat with the German language, his descent into the language of death in order to bring words back to the light, an immemorial echo of his mother. He needed to begin speaking again from the abyss of the heavens, from the tombs in the air, from the caesura of Auschwitz.40

Celan's words were *er-schweigen* – "torn from silence." And silence was a "burden" that could also become an attack: "the attack of silence against you, the attacks of silence."41 The poet Celan spoke *in die Stille*, he broke the silence, he cleaved it. He claimed no originality, nor any original creativity. He admitted his "reproductivity," a primary accusation against the Jews. His profession was similar to that of the *Ferge*, the ferryman who brings people from one river bank to the other, one who translates. The poet translates the silence of those who have been silenced, and he redeems it. His words are not born of an *Entsprechen*, a "responding [. . .] to the appeal of language" – as Heidegger had suggested.42 Rather, his is a *Gegen-Wort*, a counter-word, against those who negate, or those who remain silent. And it bears the wound from which it originated, articulating the muffled babble, carving it like a wound in the German language.

Just as it was about to be extinguished by annihilation, breath became word. After Auschwitz, poetry was this inversion. "Poetry is perhaps this: an *Atemwende,* a breathturn."43 This inversion was also – and above all – a subversion, a revolt. Celan's *Atemwende* could thus be translated as "revolution in breathing." For Celan, poetry was a passing from the renouncement of silence to the messianic audacity of language.

Heidegger was fascinated by Celan's *Atemwende*. He studied Celan's work, and had a deep appreciation for it. He even tried to meet the poet; he invited him to Freiburg. And if this poet was so near to his heart, the motive was surely also the Shoah. The two men met several times, and their complex relationship grew over the course of almost twenty years. But many consider the time that they met in Todtnauberg on July 25, 1967 to be epoch-making, perhaps because of its emblematic significance. The previous day, Celan had given a lecture in the main lecture hall of the University of Freiburg, before an audience of more than 1,000. Heidegger was in the first row. After the lecture, the two men went out together into the Black Forest. The conversation that they had that morning is shrouded in mystery. In the guestbook of Heidegger's lodge, Celan wrote: "In the *Hütte*-book, while gazing on the well-star, with a hope for a word to come in the heart."44 Several days later, on the first of August 1967, he wrote the famous poem "Todtnauberg."45 They never met again. Heidegger wanted to take Celan to the mouth of the Danube in the summer of 1970, through his favorite landscape, the one poetized by Hölderlin. But a few months earlier, on April 20, 1970, Celan had taken his own life by drowning in the Seine.

Heidegger never spoke publicly about what had happened during the war. No one could convince him to – neither his former students, nor his colleagues. Even Rudolf Bultmann had tried – in vain. For his part, Celan was convinced that a word from Heidegger was indispensable – that he should admit his mistake and denounce Neonazism and the new anti-Semitism. Heidegger, more than anyone else, should have spoken. Celan was almost obsessed by the idea of convincing Heidegger to make a statement.

Was it "shame" – as he had once confessed to Jaspers – that prevented Heidegger from speaking?46 Was it a sense of guilt? Dismay in the face of the enormity of the catastrophe that he, like many others, could not imagine in the form and in the proportions that it had taken, and that seemed to go beyond any discussion? Did Heidegger shroud himself in silence because he realized – as Derrida had surmised – the impossibility of finding a word capable of expressing what had happened?47

Several times, in the *Black Notebooks* dating from after 1945,

Heidegger spoke about "silence," and alluded to his own. He defiantly clarified his distance from "publicity": "not taking part in the public chatter – this does not mean to be silent."48 And again: "I do not want to be silent. But it is necessary."49 While he denounced what he called the "dictatorship of publicity," Heidegger was convinced that the time for him to speak, and for what he had to say, had not yet come.50 In this sense, he was explicit: "True silence is silent even about itself. Therefore speak at the right time, and let it be only in the saga of writing."51

Whatever Heidegger had to say, he wrote it in the *Black Notebooks*, which tear away the veil of his presumed silence and resolve the great *topos* of twentieth-century philosophy – his silence about the Shoah. As Trawny has written, Celan's hope was crushed forever: "Heidegger's philosophical thinking was silent about the event about which one cannot be silent. If silence can again annihilate those who have been annihilated, then Heidegger's silence cast this dark shadow on his philosophy."52

3 "The Production of Corpses" and Ontic Indifference

In reality, Heidegger did not remain silent. In fact, he spoke about the Shoah on several occasions, in a direct way or – more often – indirectly. His two famous texts, the *Letter on "Humanism"* of 1947 and "The Question Concerning Technology" of 1953, especially when read with the *Black Notebooks* as a point of departure, appear together to be a sort of apology and an attempt to respond to the philosophical questions raised by the Shoah.

An early circumstance to speak about the Shoah presented itself when Heidegger's former student Marcuse, who had had to emigrate because he was a Jew, returned to Germany for a brief period after the war and went to visit Heidegger in Todtnauberg. After he returned to the United States, Marcuse wrote to Heidegger on August 28, 1947 to urge him to intervene publicly.

> Dear Herr Heidegger,
>
> [. . .] you are considered one of its [the Nazi regime's] strongest intellectual proponents [. . .] Many of us have long awaited a statement from you [. . .] I – and very many others

> – have admired you as a philosopher; from you we have learned an infinite amount. [. . .] *But he* [a philosopher] *cannot be deceived about a regime that has killed millions of Jews – merely because they were Jews.*53

Heidegger responded in a letter dated January 20, 1948, in which he reiterated that no "retraction" was possible, and repeated: "I expected from National Socialism a spiritual renewal of life in its entirety." And he went on:

> To the just and serious charges that you express about a regime that murdered millions of Jews, that made terror into an everyday phenomenon, and that turned everything that pertains to the ideas of spirit, freedom and truth into its bloody opposite, I can merely add that if instead of "Jews" you had written "East Germans" [i.e., Germans of the eastern territories, *statt "Juden" "Ostdeutsche"*], then the same holds true [*genauso*] for one of the Allies, with the difference that everything that has occurred since 1945 has become public knowledge, while the bloody terror of the Nazis in point of fact had been kept a secret from the German people.54

Marcuse in turn responded on May 13, 1948, beginning his letter with the words "For a long time I wasn't sure as to whether I should answer your letter of January 20. . ." This date had perhaps been put on the letter unintentionally by Marcuse's former professor, but Marcuse remembered it well, because January 20, 1942 was the date on which the infamous Wannsee Conference had taken place.

> We were very well aware of this situation – perhaps even better aware than people who were in Germany. [. . .] We knew, and I myself saw it too, that the beginning already contained the end. [. . .] Have you, the philosopher, confused the liquidation of occidental Dasein with its renewal? [. . .] You write that everything that I say about the extermination of the Jews applies just as much to the allies, if instead of "Jews" one were to insert "East Germans." With this sentence don't you stand outside of the dimension in which a conversation between men is even possible – outside of Logos? For only outside of the dimension of logic is it

> possible to explain, to relativize [*auszugleichen*], to "comprehend" a crime by saying that others would have done the same thing. Even further: how is it possible to equate the torture, the maiming and the annihilation of millions of men with the forcible relocation of population groups who suffered none of these outrages?[55]

From the moment that this private correspondence between Marcuse and Heidegger was published, it sparked a heated discussion.[56] In the face of Heidegger's position, it would perhaps be legitimate to limit oneself to simply saying "it speaks for itself," as some have done. But it is evident that complex philosophical and political questions were being posed here – first and foremost because Heidegger's letter endorses the theory of two forms of totalitarianism that was developed, as is well known, by Hannah Arendt. In his letter of January 20, 1948, Heidegger compared Nazism to Stalinism; the crimes of the former, he wrote, were similar to the crimes of the latter. According to this view, the lager corresponded to the gulag. Marcuse rightly pointed out the difference between the crimes of the two regimes, and denounced Heidegger's position, which put the Jews on the same footing – *genauso* – as the East Germans.

It is understandable why some have seen in Heidegger's reply the beginning of the so-called *Historikerstreit*, the debate among historians, philosophers, and intellectuals that took place in Germany in the mid-1980s.[57] In fact, there began a strategy, well-documented in the *Black Notebooks*, of telling the story of a defensive war waged by Germany against Judeo-Bolshevism, making the Jews the effective winners of the planetary war (no matter that they had disappeared by the millions), while the Germans were portrayed as the defeated, who had fought heroically with unequal arms (because the Jews, masters of deceit, caused others to fight for them). The Germans had been victims of the brutal fury of the Allies. When Heidegger spoke of "East Germans," he was also referring to the bombing raids on Dresden. The winners and the losers were, so to speak, temporary, not definitive. This narrative strategy, very widespread at that time, also had the advantage of maintaining the shroud of mystery that enveloped the lagers, and above all the gas chambers.[58] But it is still necessary to emphasize that, during the immediate postwar

period, the extermination of the European Jews, as tragic as it was, was widely considered to be just one of the many events of a total devastation. While the survivors were silent, and the persecutors took advantage of the period of amnesty and amnesia after the war, the conscience of Europe did not succeed in perceiving the enormity of the Final Solution in that abyss. The singularity of Auschwitz was diluted by the other crimes that had been committed.59

Hannah Arendt played a decisive role, because she intuited what had happened – industrialized massacre – and was the first to speak, as early as 1946, of "death factories."60 On the one hand, Arendt understood with increasing clarity that what she was seeing in the lagers was the "transformation of human nature."61 On the other hand, however, the extermination seemed to her to be the epilogue of technological civilization, of that bureaucratic organization of the world in which totalitarian domination had imposed itself. It was precisely the concept of totalitarianism, which suggested to her the connection between Nazism and Stalinism – for her, two faces of the same phenomenon – that prevented Arendt from grasping the difference between a concentration camp and an extermination camp. So she took the *Vernichtungslager* (extermination camp or killing center) to be an extreme variant of the concentration camp system.

In early December 1949, Heidegger was invited to give a series of lectures in the city hall of the Free Hanseatic city of Bremen. The lectures were entitled: *The Thing* (*Das Ding*), *Positionality* (*Das Gestell*), *The Danger* (*Die Gefahr*), and *The Turn* (*Die Kehre*). Addressing an adoring audience, eager to leave behind his complicity with Nazism and to look, with the anxiety elicited by the Cold War, toward the new challenges of the future, Heidegger took on the issue of technology, outlining the concept of *Gestell* – enframing, positionality – that was destined to have a profound influence on philosophy during the following decades.62 The esoteric concept of *Gestell* had already made the rounds in Germany when Heidegger took it up again in his famous lecture on technology in Munich in 1953. In his oracular style, he sounded the alarm, describing the threat that technology represented not only for human beings, but also for Nature. Even "the cultivation

of the fields has been sucked into the vortex"; agriculture had become "a mechanized food industry."[63] The text ends here. But in Bremen, in his second lecture, Heidegger added:

> Agriculture is now a mechanized food industry, in essence the same [*das Selbe*] as the production of corpses in the gas chambers and extermination camps, the same [*das Selbe*] as the blockading and starving of countries, the same [*das Selbe*] as the production of hydrogen bombs.[64]

Thus, according to Heidegger, the industrialization of agriculture was *im Wesen* (in essence) the same as the *Fabrication von Leichen in Gaskammern und Vernichtungslagern*, which in turn was the same as the kind of "blockade" to which nations could be subjected, and the same as the production of hydrogen bombs.

This passage was defined as "scandalously inadequate" by Lacoue-Labarthe.[65] And many others have used the word "scandal."[66] Heidegger's reduction of the "immeasurable" – the death of millions of people – to the same level as mechanization appeared to be obscene and unacceptable. And this was not a matter of an extemporaneous comparison, because "the same," which is repeated three times in this passage, echoes the *genauso* of Heidegger's letter to Marcuse. The provocation was intentional.

But was it Heidegger who was being provocative? Or was it perhaps the framework of technology? And was Heidegger instead limiting himself to shedding light on the leveling power of technology? For that matter, didn't Adorno also put forth similar theses?[67] Seen in this way, Heidegger did nothing more than refer to the essence of technology that was concealed behind these phenomena. As outrageous as it might seem, for Heidegger comparing mechanized agriculture, extermination, and hydrogen bombs unmasked the same uncontrollable machinery. Those who reject Heidegger's comparison and its underlying logic would be avoiding thinking about the issues raised by the scandalous nature of the comparison; they would also be closing their eyes to the looming danger represented by technology.

Heidegger's comparison is ambivalent: on the one hand, he could use it to legitimize a reflection on extermination; on the other, it

seems as if he believed that whoever could not follow his comparison was incapable of grasping the phenomenon of mechanization in all of its depth. But here, as in the *Black Notebooks*, Heidegger proceeded to an abstraction that was dictated by the history of Being. From the essential heights of technology, its manifestations become inessential. This is the result of an excessive, rigid, ontological difference: for Heidegger the history of Being was exempt from historical and political events, which he relegated to an ontic indifference. Nothing else mattered except the alienation of beings from Being. And just as the Jew, accused of causing that alienation, had been eliminated, so beneath the leveling and anesthetizing gaze of the philosopher of Being, extermination became an event like any other, ontically indifferent.

In the history of Being, there is no place for the muffled cries of the victims.68 There is no place for horror or trauma. It is as if the history of Being proceeded, pitilessly imperturbable, toward a metaphysical propensity that appears to be in continuity with Nietzsche, with Hegel, even with Plato.69 This is the source of Heidegger's ontological disinterest in the Shoah. Once the technical framework had been revealed, extermination became philosophically irrelevant.70 If Heidegger had discovered the singularity of Auschwitz, if he had recognized it as a traumatic event, he would have allowed that trauma to shatter the ontological coordinates, blowing the History of Being to smithereens. But on his nocturnal horizon, marked by a distant light that should illuminate the earth in the morning, no ontic intrusion could interrupt that destination – not even the eclipse of humanity.

4 The Ontological Massacre: Parmenides and Auschwitz

If the Jewish question was metaphysical, so was the solution. And it was precisely for this reason that there could not be a provisory, temporary liquidation: it had to be final, definitive; it had to put an end to that interminable problem of the Jews that had plagued and disrupted Western history. The *Endlosung* was inscribed as such in an apocalyptic *finis historiae* scenario. The extermination was not an expulsion from geographic boundaries, but an expulsion

from the edge of the world and from the history of the world. It was the extermination of the boundary itself. Everything had to be canceled out in absolute oblivion – as if nothing had ever been, as if no Jew had ever existed.

The massacre was perpetrated therefore under the banner of an annihilation that was to leave no traces. From the beginning, it was shrouded in silence and darkness. *Nacht und Nebel*, “night and fog,” the words that in a scene from Wagner’s *Das Rheingold* are uttered by Alberich, the king of the Nibelung, as he appears donning a magical helmet, became a motto – *NN-Aktion, NN-Transport, NN-Häfling* – indicating the disappearance of the victims without a trace.71 “NN” therefore means not only night and fog, but also nothingness.

The *bellum judaicum* took place behind the scenes – both the political and the historical scenes; it was accomplished thanks to the noise of the other wars, which drowned out the silent crime that was taking place in the heart of Europe. What kind of enemies were the Jews? And what was the war against them? They were enemies who were not worthy of a proper war, adversaries who did not deserve the tribute or the light of open confrontation, or the honor of arms. Once they had been driven out as a *Menschentümlichkeit*, in a sphere that was at the same time on this side as well as on the other side of human, they were exterminated not in the name of not belonging to the “human species” – they were eliminated because they were Jews.72 The scene in which the Jews were annihilated was not the tragic, heroic stage of the front lines of a war, but the dreary, ignoble scene in which trash is gotten rid of – an “industrial” scene like that of an ordinary production line, equipped with the mechanisms of technology. Conventional weapons were not used, nor was there an army that waged war; rather, gas was used, administered within an operation of urban cleansing, of disposal of the superfluous and the un-worldly.

Inhumanity pervaded and was the hallmark of a massacre that took place without the spilling of blood. Thus, paradoxically, that metaphysical essence – blood – in which it was purported to grasp the arcaneness of Judaism, and that had decreed the Jews’ death sentence, played no role in the liquidation. No blood flowed, no

blood gushed forth – almost as if to signify that those who were being eliminated were not living beings, but entities without essence, already destined forever to non-being, because of their *Andersartigkeit* (otherness).

The ontological massacre sealed this non-being in a metaphysical silence. The inessential beings, secreted away and rendered invisible, were annihilated without knowing about the annihilation, which was shrouded in lies that accompanied them all the way to the gas chambers. From the *Enpangszeremonie* to the *Entwesung*, from the "welcome ceremony" – that is, the blows and insults reserved for those who got off the trains – to the bureaucratic "disinfection," euphemisms used to cover up the crude, atrocious obscenity of what was being done permeated and at the same time disguised the process of extermination. For that matter, the Nazis believed that lies were a punishment befitting the Jews, who had lied and dissimulated, pretending to be what they were not. In the non-being of the Jews there already resounded the threat of annihilation. Innumerable metaphors, apparently innocuous, often coined even by philosophers, were followed to the letter in the Final Solution. This following to the letter was the task of the executioners within the bureaucratic organization of the camps.

The extermination, which obeyed no logic – neither political, nor economic, nor social, nor military – responded to ontology and is inscribed within Western metaphysics. In this sense, as Lacoue-Labarthe has maintained, "in the Auschwitz apocalypse, it was nothing less than the West, in its essence, that revealed itself."[73]

Certainly, it is necessary to be on guard against a gesture, too often repeated, that with a certain nonchalance unloads the responsibility for the ethical-political catastrophe of the twentieth century onto "Western metaphysics."[74] But undoubtedly, after the *Black Notebooks*, Auschwitz seems more than ever connected with the oblivion of Being. And the association between two thresholds appears to be justified – the threshold described in the poem *On Nature* by Parmenides and the one that Primo Levi saw when he arrived at the lager at Auschwitz.

> There are the gates of the ways of Night and Day, fitted above with a lintel and below with a threshold of stone.[75]

> Then the lorry stopped, and we saw a large door, and above it a sign, brightly illuminated (its memory still strikes me in my dreams), *Arbeit Macht Frei*, work gives freedom.76

Why, then, Parmenides at Auschwitz? What could connect the fragmentary poem by the Greek philosopher with the testimony of the Holocaust survivor Primo Levi? This is a question that will have to remain open – perhaps only in the form of a suggestion.77 The path that Levi was forced to take after crossing the threshold recalls the one interdicted by the Fates – the path of non-being.

In the fragments of Parmenides' poem, which Heidegger commented upon several times, three paths were distinguished: one that says "what *is*" (in Greek, *ésti*), the path of being; one that says "what *is not*" (*ouk ésti*), the path of non-being; and finally the path of the mortals who in speaking mix being and non-being and therefore live outside truth. The second path cannot be divined, because it is not even walkable: the "is not" does not exist, therefore it cannot strictly be thought, nor said. Parmenides took refuge behind the only possible *logos*: *ésti*, "is."

To save the *logos*, and also to save philosophy, Plato committed a famous patricide. Speaking, not by chance, is the "Eleatic Stranger," who in the *Sophist* dialogue argues against Parmenides that non-being is, in a certain way, *being*, because saying that a thing *is not* does not necessarily mean that it does not exist, but that it is *other* than: "When we say not-being, we speak, I think, not of something that is the opposite of being, but only of something different."78 Thus, from absolute negativity, from the non-existence of negative nothingness, we pass to the negativity that refers to the other and to the existence of the other, *héteron*. This is an epochal passage: *being other* becomes part of philosophy through an expropriation of the identity of Being that is achieved through the subversive question of the Eleatic Stranger. But Parmenides' Being remains waiting in ambush, ready to rise up to the level of a substantive written with a capital letter.79 Thus, this Being, which forgets that it is merely a simple verb, makes it impossible to recognize the other, and threatens to condemn the other to non-being in order to purify itself.

5 "Do They die? They Do Not Die, They Are

Liquidated . . .”

It was the survivors of the Holocaust who delineated a phenomenology of life in the death camps. But perhaps the more complex question, which returned torturously in the survivors' testimonies, is precisely the question of death. What was is like to disappear in ash and smoke? And in what way did that looming presence profoundly change every day, every hour, every instant of life in the camps?

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger had disclosed a new way of looking at death. While most philosophers before him had speculated on the beyond, on the immortality of the soul, on a life after death, Heidegger questioned the meaning of death from here. Death in general did not exist; each death was mine, yours, theirs – every mortal was confronted with the distressing possibility of no longer existing. Death was not a fact, but rather a possibility; indeed, it was the most essential possibility of Being.[80] The very authenticity of existence is decided in the relationship with death. Usually, the thought of death is avoided; the tendency is to remove it. One passively listens to the idle talk that makes death seem to be a perennial “not-yet” that touches other people but not us, that is an anonymous “one dies.”[81] Then one can be liberated from illusions and preempt death, anticipating it – which is the way to arrive at oneself, to be authentic. Thus, death should be seen not as the event that puts an end to the course of a life, that limits its temporal line.[82] Death always accompanies existence: the human being is always already old enough to die; in fact, he is always in the process of dying. The relationship with the most extreme possibility of life – that is what Heidegger meant by *being-toward-death* – allows beings to assume their own finiteness and to look at the constellation of their own possibilities, arriving at themselves, projecting themselves into the future. This is authentic. “Mortals,” *die Sterblichen*, as Hölderlin had said, are those who do not simply perish, as animals do, but who die.[83] Death is not a deceasing; rather, it is a passage.

“I will assume it is known that the camp inmate did not live next door to, but in the same room with death.”[84] While he was examining that particular phenomenon – dying in a death camp – Améry declared the downfall of the “esthetic view of death,” and

criticized Heidegger's concept of being-toward-death. In the lagers, the prisoners were concerned with dying, not with death. Améry pointed out that when one is free, one can think about death without necessarily being in anguish about dying. In the lagers, this was impossible. "Dying was omnipresent, death vanished from sight."[85] Thus, one lived every day for dying, waiting to be put to death; one lived with the dread of dying in the gas chambers, while being deprived of "death" *per se*.

Primo Levi wrote: "One hesitates to call their death death."[86] In the camps, life was no longer life, but death was no longer death. And yet, to comprehend the offense committed upon the dignity of death, it is necessary to turn to Heidegger who, as paradoxical as he might be, offered the ontological coordinates. The extermination in the camps had been an assembly line, a "production of corpses," because death had been reduced to annihilation.

> Hundreds of thousands die in masses. Do they die? They perish. They are put down. They become pieces of inventory of a standing reserve for the fabrication of corpses. Do they die? They are unobtrusively liquidated in annihilation camps. And even apart from such as these – millions now in China abjectly die in starvation.[87]

The annihilation in the camps had meant above all this: that death had been precluded. Thus, Heidegger's question: "Do they die?" *Sterben zie?* Rather, they become *Bestandstücke*, "pieces of inventory" that are *unauffällig liquidiert* – "unobtrusively liquidated." In this liquidation of the Jewish question, what was dealt with by Hitler's bureaucracy had already been reduced to pieces of inventory. The SS called the inmates of the camps *Stücke*, pieces, and they called the corpses *Figuren*. The figurative Jew, reduced to a "figure," expelled from human society, no longer mortal, no longer held to be worthy of dying, did not have the right to die. His death was *ungestorben*, "not dead."[88]

The horror that Auschwitz introduced into the history of the world lies not only in annihilation, not only in the number of victims, but in the offense upon the dignity of death.[89] The notion that a corpse deserves respect, and therefore the idea of burial, is part of the ethical patrimony of humanity. The nauseating odor that emanated

from the crematoria was a sign of the supreme outrage that Auschwitz inflicted upon the dignity of mortals.

6 Positionality, Technology, Crime

As the extreme outcome of metaphysics, technology is not a neutral tool that can be adopted for the benefit of an emancipated humanity. Conceived with an eye to domination and control, it has been turned upside-down, and is the opposite. This appears clearly, for example, in the relationship between technology and Nature, where man's production, *Bestellen*, a continual demand, becomes an uncontrollable mechanism, a *Gestell*, "positionality," a structure, an enframing that is imposed on Nature.[90] Modern individuals who believe that they have everything at their disposal because of technology are inexorably let down. The person with projects becomes part of a project. He discovers that he is the object of an unlimited production – he is merely a piece of inventory within the established order, a part to be melted down once it has been used and consumed.

In his Bremen lectures, Heidegger's thinking revolved around the concept of *Gestell*, which he defined as "the essence of technology."[91] One placement provokes another – with no more limits. For that matter, technology for Heidegger was dominance of the unlimited. Each thing, but also each human being, becomes a "piece of inventory"; that is, they subsist as part of a mechanism that is an end unto itself, whose only purpose is to assure itself of an order that constantly re-presents itself as *the same*. Man – a spare part – becomes a "functionary of a requisitioning" whose subsistence has the sole purpose of positioning something else – he is replaceable.

The de-humanization of a being, which Heidegger called "*un*menschlich," *in*human, to signify that, in spite of everything, he will not be transformed into a machine, is delineated against the backdrop of the lager. In fact, Heidegger wrote: "Men and women must place themselves [*sich stellen*] in a work service [*Arbeitsdienst*]. They are ordered. They are met by a positioning that places them, i.e., commandeers them. One places the other. He retains him. He positions him."[92]

On the one hand, Heidegger, in laying out *Gestell* and its function, did not open the gates of the lager, but rather shed light on the "order" that governed it. In this way, he clearly demonstrated the complicated connection between technology and the Shoah (but also between technology and Nazism, not to mention between the Shoah and metaphysics).93 And yet, on the other hand, while the basic enframing became clear – the framework that ontologically ordered the camp, and that in the camp achieved its paroxystic outcome – what got lost from sight were the ontological differences that could put that ontological description into crisis.

First and foremost, what kind of camp was being referred to? A concentration camp, or an extermination camp? Even though both Heidegger and Arendt spoke about "death factories," the distinction was not well known, and certainly it was also concealed by the concept of totalitarianism that in the end put Auschwitz and Kolyma on the same level.94

The first question has to do with the singularity of Auschwitz, which makes it an unprecedented event even among the other Nazi crimes, and therefore difficult to compare with other genocides. The second question has to do with the theme of the banality of evil, which fits easily within Heidegger's framework and is the outcome of his reflections. If Eichmann was nothing more than a bureaucratic functionary who followed orders, then he can in effect be seen as the prototype of the banality of evil. But if this is so, if the Nazis in the camps were all *Angestellte* – employees – who, then, was responsible? A dangerous breach opens up in the barbed wire, between executioners and victims. And this explains why, in Heidegger's wake, but also in Arendt's, the Shoah could be talked about as the consequence of *Gestell* and could be equated with nothing more precise than the death of God in the camps.

The first question should be answered in this way: in spite of their similarity, the difference between a concentration camp and an extermination camp is qualitative. Both are places of death; but death has a completely different role in them. The system of labor camps can be summarized as the enslavement and exploitation of people with a precise objective; in the Soviet Union, deportees were used to de-forest entire regions, to build railroads and put down power lines, to construct urban areas. The focus of the labor

camps was work; death was an accident that was foreseeable but not planned. In the death camps, death was at one and the same time the focus and the immediate goal. Most of the Jews who got out of the train cars were led directly to the gas chambers. Praise for the extermination camps was based on the number of dead that they produced: the more dead bodies that Hilter's machine produced, the more the outcome was praised. Even when human resources would have been useful for the German war effort, extermination was always the top priority.95 Absolute terror produced nothing, because it was solely an act of destruction.96 Extermination for extermination's sake was without precedent; not only did it elude any logic, it also eluded any economy.

But "crime against humanity" was also unprecedented – it was a concept that was later taken up again and used widely. This question has directly to do with philosophy. The Jew was reduced to a *Muselmann* (literally, "Moslem"), the German word used by concentration camp inmates to refer to prisoners who were near death: man as nothing more than a bundle of physical functions, who, while still remaining human, has been pushed into a zone that has nothing left of humanity in it – the place of an experiment that had never been carried out before, in which beings who were considered to be non-human were transformed into non-human beings. Their humanity itself was called into question.

Although human life had the same value in the concentration camps and the death camps, there were different processes that led to the inmates' death, and the process of death itself was different. The process of industrializing death in the extermination camps marked a qualitative change. The mechanism of the gas chambers, which assumed the ritual of technology, made it possible to put into action the Nazi's planetary plan for a biopolitical remodeling of the human race.

Finally, the extermination carried out in the death camps was unprecedented because the gas chambers introduced the concept of the anonymity of the executioners, shattering the responsibility for the killing. Who led the victims into the gas chambers? Who poured out the Zyklon B? The *Sonderkommandos* (work units made up of Nazi death camp prisoners, tasked with disposing of the bodies of inmates who had been exterminated) were a brutal invention of the death camps.

Taken up by their specialized tasks, which they carried out with meticulous ardor, the Nazis remained distant from the final result of their actions. The mediated work of extermination made the undertaking easier, enabling the Nazis to remain indifferent to the human material that they were contributing to eliminate. It was easy for them to look away, avoiding having to look their victims in the face.

The question of responsibility arises here. Arendt drew attention to the Nazi criminals ensconced behind their desks. In that bureaucratic massacre, they were nothing more than a cog in a wheel that would have worked even without them. Eichmann, therefore, seemed to Arendt to be an example of scandalous stupidity, a colorless bureaucrat who remained faithful to the pledge he had taken when he assumed his office. "Eichmann had a muddled general outlook and ideology with respect to 'the Jewish question.'"[97] For that matter, hadn't the Nazi criminals maintained that they were simply carrying out orders? How could a criminal who had merely been a functionary merit condemnation?

Günther Anders had a different perspective, and therefore was critical of Heidegger. For Anders, the introduction of "monstrosity" had occurred without any resistance being made. Apropos of this, Anders spoke of "infernal rules' [. . .] 'if what we have to react to grows excessively out of proportion, our ability to really feel it fails." We become "emotional illiterates"; "Six million is simply a number for us; the murder of ten people perhaps still causes some resonance with us; but the murder of one single human being fills us with horror."[98] Thus, responsibility also has to do with imagination.

But – Anders emphasized – it was a matter of "exploited disproportionality": the powerlessness of our imagination was profitably exploited by Eichmann and the others who directed the annihilation in the death camps.[99] And he warned: "the paths of responsibility and cynicism diverge irremediably."[100] The line between executioners and victims was clearly drawn. There was not, nor could there be, any room for complicity or shared responsibility.

7 The Northeast Wind: Heading Toward Defeat

The pages of the *Black Notebooks* that date from 1942 to 1945, before the defeat of Germany in World War II, are shot through with a confident, febrile sense of expectation that gradually gives way to a gloomy sense of resignation. During that "age of the end," in which the beginning was nowhere in sight, Heidegger sought to orient himself in Hölderlin's poetry.101 *Der Nordost wehet*, "The northeaster blows" – is the first line of Hölderlin's hymn "Andenken" ("Remembrance"), written in the summer of 1942.102 Hölderlin was looking toward the East, toward the front lines where his two sons were fighting, toward the limitless space of Russia, where the fate of the Third Reich was being played out. These were the days when, along the banks of the River Don, German troops were getting ready to enter Stalingrad in order to unleash their final, decisive attack.

"On this land, which has become a wandering star, the war rages."103 The fact that only an extraordinary event could change the course of history did not escape Heidegger, who was following the sequence of events, keeping watch over the unfolding of history. Perhaps nowhere else in these pages was the history of Being so intertwined with the history of Germany; it took it on like a burden, interpreted it, sustained it, protected it, and above all it preserved and kept care of it for the future – a future beyond the war. "The time of the Germans is not yet over. But the form that their future history will take remains concealed."104

And yet the moment when "the Germans will be put to the test of universal history" was coming closer; it was unstoppable.105 And it was increasingly doubtful that they would be capable of furthering their own destiny. What was certain, instead, was the price paid. "*German blood will be let in vain*" – Heidegger had already warned.106 Every German soldier who fell would fall in vain if, beyond the destruction of the modern human race, "the beginning of the German essence" were not saved.107 This preoccupation became the dominant note in Heidegger's writings from the last years of the war: "The 'losses' must be transformed into something else, more conciliating, and become a beginning."108 Dread, pain, sadness, echoes of a wounded country hurtling toward destruction – these recurring words found their philosophical sublimation in Heidegger's *Black Notebooks*. "Sorrow is the pure form of the fulfillment of the truth of

Being."[109] While death loomed, Germany needed to prepare itself for a mourning in whose senseless enormity Heidegger was still seeking some meaning. "To what point are the dead closer to us than the living? Who are the dead? What is death? It is the advent of the truth of Being. Why do we so rarely submit to the nearness of the dead? [. . .] Authenticity and the constancy of our mourning will be measured against our capacity to preserve, in memory, what the fallen, with their nearness, are and want to be for us and for our catharsis."[110]

But the hours were numbered, and the "pincers" were tightening their grip more and more around Germany. "Is it the breaking out of the Asian steppe?" "No!" – responded Heidegger. There was nothing "Asian" in technology, in politics, in the war strategy. Rather, it was a "flowing back" of that which was modernly European in Europe, to bring about Germany's self-destruction.[111]

More than "destruction," the word that recurs in the *Annotations I*, written before the end of the war, is *Vernichtung*, "annihilation." Already in the *Ponderings XIV* – therefore around 1940 and 1941 – Heidegger spoke with increasing frequency about "annihilation." But, as the global nature of the war emerged, the term *Selbsvernichtung* (self-annihilation) began to appear. What does this disturbing compound term mean? And why did Heidegger make such an apparently ample use of it?

The "planetary" end would not be a simple ending; it would not be the result of an ending, the end of an end – rather, it would be an apocalyptic translation into nothingness – even the end, the ending itself.[112] What would remain would be only the beginning. Along with *Verendung, Zerstörung, Verwüstung*, one might say that *Vernichtung* was a word for the end, but so much more telling than the others, because the ending would be not only destruction, but annihilation.[113] From the time that the conflict had become a world war, and the whole world was at war, not only was there no longer a front line – there was no longer room for those differences that the front preserved. There could no longer be an *Ausweg*, "a way out," for anyone.[114] What's more, in the age of "*supernihilism*," of "utterly worthless nothingness," the annihilation of the Other could take place continuously along with

self-annihilation.115 This was the danger of planetary war, not only annihilation – and not so much that as self-annihilation. For Heidegger, these were the two outcomes to which war could lead – where there would no longer be winners and losers, a distinction that falls within metaphysics – and where instead the end and the beginning were at play, and that could end only if the end self-terminated and let the beginning be.116

In these new modalities of the planetary war, decipherable in the history of Being, the "highest type and highest act of politics," transformed by war, consisted "in maneuvering the opponent into a position whereby *he is compelled to proceed to his own self-annihilation*."117 For this reason, politics cannot be distracted by "temporary defeats"; it must, instead, "have a deep breath and a long arm," waiting for the right time.118 But "in what figure is this self-annihilation carried out?"119 It is not surprising that for Heidegger the figure that represented *Selbsvernichtung* was technology. "Technology reaches its highest level when, being an object of consumption [*Verzehr*], it no longer has anything to consume – except itself."120 Technology consumes itself, usurizes itself, devours itself, destroys itself. It is simultaneously the paradigm and the place of self-consumption – another way to say, on the planetary horizon, that it recovers from metaphysics. One cannot recover from metaphysics without the self-consumption of technology.

8 *Selbstvernichtung*: The Shoah and the "Self-Annihilation" of the Jews

It was in this context that Heidegger again spoke about the Jews in three passages, contiguous with his ponderings on technology and its exploitation. This is not surprising: for Heidegger, the Jews, on account of their complicity with metaphysics, were the agents of technology. The three passages have a decisive impact, both because they were written during the period when Hitler's death factories were operating at full capacity, and because in them there emerged the metaphysical concept that Heidegger had of the Jews – to the point that, in an increasingly abstract way, he chose the substantive adjective *das Jüdische* – "that which is Jewish." The role in the history of the West that Heidegger attributed to Judaism

finally appeared clearly here. After 1945, direct references to Jews in the *Black Notebooks* gave way to allusions, metaphors, and hidden meanings.

In the first of these passages, Heidegger took up again one of the key themes of the Nazis' apocalyptic vision, which identified in the Jew the "prince of this world" – the demonic, katechonic image of the Antichrist who holds back the history of the world.[121] Seen from this perspective, the "Third Reich" would be the realm of salvation. But for Heidegger it was, instead, a matter of the history of metaphysics and of its outcomes. The Jew, the embodiment of the ending, *das Ende*, did not permit the *Vollendung*, the consummation of metaphysics:

> The Antichrist, like everything that is anti-, must derive from the same essential foundation from which what it is the opposite of derives – hence, from that from which "the Christ" derives. And "the Christ" derives from the community of the Jews [*Judenschaft*]. This is, in the time of the Christian West, that is, of metaphysics, the principle of destruction. And this is what is destructive, because it overturns the consummation of metaphysics – that is, of the metaphysics of Hegel, via Marx. Spirit and culture become the superstructure of "life" – that is, of the economy, of organization – that is, of the biological – of the "people."[122]

Judaism, understood here as *Judenschaft* – an ambivalent term that, as suggested in the Grimms' etymological dictionary, means "community of the Jews" as well as "belonging to the Jewish people" – was seen in the time of metaphysics as the *Prinzip der Zerstörung*, the "principle of destruction." Not because it destroyed metaphysics – and in this sense it is necessary to distinguish between *Destruktion* and *Zerstörung* – but because, on the contrary, for the umpteenth time, Judaism was unmasked in its complicity with metaphysics, whose continuation it favored. The theological-political theme of the Antichrist was translated philosophically into a destructive principle that reined in, inhibited, created an obstacle to the consummation of metaphysics. But, paradoxically, it was a motion that put a stop to this consummation: *Umkehrung* – the motion of inversion. The Jew, an agent of acceleration, created an obstacle by moving,

continually reversing the consummation of metaphysics.[123] This confirms that, for Heidegger, the Jew represented the end that is repeated obsessively, impeding the rise of the beginning. The example introduced by Heidegger is emblematic: Marx. If Hegel's dialectic was situated at the end of metaphysics, where it would suffice to let metaphysics extinguish itself, then the intervention of Marx – or, better said, of Marx the Jew (the Jew who sought to overthrow the dialectic, standing it on its head to then put it back on its feet) – the intervention of Marx would prevent this extinguishing.[124] Thus, the overthrowing effected by Marxism not only left metaphysics intact, it actually favored its persistence. And it was not by chance that Heidegger again criticized the concept of "superstructure."[125] For that matter, Marxism was in Heidegger's view not only an outcome of metaphysics, but also a product of Judaism – a form of secularized Messianism.[126]

Faced with an end perpetrated in a destructive way, the only thing left to do was to return, via *Andenken* – remembrance – to the Greek beginning that would be intact, untouched by Judaism and by Christianity. Heidegger's criticism of metaphysics took on a theological-political form, as he increasingly compared Judaism and Christianity, seen as two faces of the same phenomenon, to which he contrasted Greek paganism. Thus, in the third passage, he wrote:

> It is from here that it should be evaluated what it means, for thought, to remember, in the initial essence of the West, that first beginning in Greekness, which has remained outside of Judaism and Christianity.[127]

But what does this have to do with annihilation, with self-annihilation, with the self-consumption of technology? The answer is in the second passage, the central one, which contains Heidegger's onto-historical interpretation of the Shoah – written at the very time that the Shoah was going on.

In this passage, the great *topos* of twentieth-century philosophy – Heidegger's purported silence about Auschwitz – is debunked:

> Only when what is essentially "Jewish" in the metaphysical sense struggles against what is "Jewish," is the apex of self-annihilation in history reached. The condition is that what is "Jewish" has everywhere completely taken over domination,

> so that even the struggle – and that first and foremost – against what is “Jewish” becomes subjected to that.[128]

For Heidegger, the word for the extermination of the Jews was *Selbstvernichtung*. If the “Jewish question” was a metaphysical question, the resolution would be just as metaphysical. The *Endlösung*, the “Final Solution,” if read in the context of the history of Being, was for Heidegger revealed as a “self-annihilation.” Heidegger intentionally avoided concreteness – Jews in flesh and blood – and instead had recourse to the most abstract subject, to the substantive adjective *das Jüdische*, which on the one hand contained the “essence” of the Jew metaphysically defined, and, on the other hand, rose to the level of a symbol of modernity, permeated and dominated by Judaism.[129] Only when *Herrschaft*, the “domination” of what was Jewish, was complete, total, would the struggle against what was Jewish then also be brought back under this domination. The figure of the enemy “forced to proceed with his own self-annihilation,” constrained to expunge himself, to cancel himself out, would reappear.

In keeping with his metaphysical anti-Semitism, Heidegger interpreted the extermination of the Jews as a “self-annihilation”: the Jews would annihilate themselves. Agents of modernity, complicit with metaphysics, the Jews followed the destiny of technology, which was summed up in the word *Verzehr*: the usurers would lend themselves, the consumers would consume themselves, the destroyers would end up destroying themselves. If the Jews were being annihilated in the lagers, it was on account of the *Gestell*, the technological framework to take over the world that they had promoted and fostered everywhere. The connection that Heidegger drew between technology and extermination should not elude us here. And he had alluded to this elsewhere as well.[130]

This definition of the Shoah, unique in its way, in its ruthless rigor, sheds new light on “what happened”; it opens up an unprecedented – and yet foreseeable and almost expected – perspective on Heidegger’s reflections on Auschwitz. Not only did he bring up the notion of an ontological massacre, attributable to the *Gestell* that functioned in the death camps, where responsibility had been shattered into fragments; he also focused on the way in which, in the intentions of those who carried it out, the extermination would

go down in history: as the self-annihilation of the Jews.

For Heidegger, no one but the Jews themselves could be called to account. The blame for their extermination fell onto them, as if they had something to expiate – whether it was the sin of deicide, or of having fostered the acceleration of technology. The expiation of Israel, the purifying fire, was – as we read even today in some theological treatises – the inevitable sacrifice, the salvific holocaust.[131] Thus, the "purification of Being" to which Heidegger had already alluded seems all the more disturbing.[132]

For Heidegger, the Shoah was the "culmination of self-annihilation in history," because only the "chosen" people – and not other peoples – the chosen people, metaphysically defined, were complicit with metaphysics, which brought with it the desert void, the nothingness of technical nihilism. The self-destruction of the Jews could therefore not be compared to that of other peoples. That event was inscribed within the history of Being, signaling the extinction of metaphysics. It was the apocalyptic moment in which the ending that did not want to come to an end, enabling a new beginning to rise up, would finally be translated into nothing.

9 The Betrayal of the "German Essence"

But the "culmination of self-annihilation" was not reached. World Judaism did not cease with the extermination at Auschwitz. And in spite of the millions who died, the agents of machination – the Jews – could even be considered to have been victorious. If they had been completely liquidated, the "Jewish question" would have been solved once and for all. But if even a few remained, those few represented an immense danger, especially for the Germans, who were really the defeated.

While the distinction between the victors and the defeated was reproduced, there was a glimpse beyond metaphysics of what might lie ahead – the risk of the "self-annihilation of the Germans." The Jews, having survived the Holocaust, might drag the Germans into the mechanism of death.

The Jews were still there. They held the reins of the power which, between the Americans and Bolshevists, now had Germany surrounded. They were the "emigrants" who were returning. And they entered, treading on German soil, as victors.

After May 8, 1945, Heidegger did not speak again about *Juden*, "Jews," but rather about *Fremde*, "foreigners."[133] Heidegger was preoccupied with the "essence" of the Germans, which had already been undermined and put in jeopardy, that estrangement that now seemed unstoppable.

> A foreign essence [*fremdes Wesen*] is encircling and contaminating our already defrauded essence. Whence comes the Germans' disposition to foreign essences, whence their ineptitude for politics?[134]

Heidegger wondered about the Germans' tendency to let themselves be seduced by foreigners, by strangers, about the scrupulous radicalness with which they committed even the most striking and enormous mistakes. But this does not in any way imply a criticism on his part, nor a re-thinking, much less repentance or rectification – just the opposite.

The *Black Notebooks* are invaluable evidence, not only because they tear away the veil of Heidegger's purported silence and reveal his vision of the Shoah, but also because they clarify what his position was in 1945, in the immediate wake of Germany's defeat.

In a way not dissimilar to Schmitt – and, to tell the truth, many other Germans – Heidegger perceived Germany's defeat in World War II as an injustice, an undeserved and unusual punishment that had laid waste to the destiny of Germany, the mission to which Germany had been called in order to save the West. But the consolation was that it was a military and political defeat, and above all only a temporary one. While there were victors and defeated, the contest was not over.

Heidegger identified with the German people. There is no trace of him distancing himself, not even in the face of proven crimes. What preoccupied him was the possibility of the self-annihilation of the Germans becoming a reality. Bitterness, resentment, rancor, and ill will permeate the hundreds of pages written during a time when, along with the defeat of Germany, Heidegger was experiencing the collapse of his own academic career.[135]

Verrat and *Rache*, "betrayal" and "revenge," are two key words that repeatedly return in these pages, and clearly explain Heidegger's position.

First of all, "betrayal" – of whom, and why? Betrayal was for Heidegger another way of saying self-annihilation of the Germans. Heidegger also used the derogatory form *Verräterei*, which means treachery – a perfidious, insidious, disloyal way of acting that is capable of damaging the common essence, ruining and perverting it.[136] The Germans – that ironclad, cohesive people who should and could have been able to sideline technology, that people who had fought until the bitter end the Bolshevik hordes and resisted the Anglo-American forces, without ever capitulating – were now at risk of being pushed to the point of self-betrayal, self-annihilation. It was not a betrayal on the military front lines – what German soldier would have ever turned traitor? Rather, it was a devious, ignoble form of faithlessness to themselves, to which the Germans could be led by others. The real risk was that the military defeat, not after all so difficult to overcome, could instead be transformed into a *Selbstvernichtung* that would have devastating consequences. Subjected to the sort of re-education to which the Allies wanted to constrain them, the Germans might have been led to believe that they were on the guilty side, and therefore let themselves give in to the annihilation of their own essence.

> Now the only thing that is continually talked about is the Americans and the French, the English and the Russians, and how we are getting along thanks to them and their work of education. No one is thinking about what is happening to the Germans, if they are still themselves, if they know who they are, if they are capable of thinking, to arrive at this knowledge, if they are capable of immersing themselves in the long period of remembrance which is the only way that the truth of their essence can mature.[137]

Although Heidegger's language is ambivalent here, it is not difficult to read between the lines what he was suggesting to the Germans: *Andenken*, remembrance. Only by pondering what had happened could the German people prepare for the future, keeping solid their true essence and the truth of their essence. This was how the Germans, the custodians of Being, could keep themselves ready for what was still to come.

For Heidegger, it was important that the "*thinking*-poetizing

people," the people of philosophers and of poets, who for that reason were the "heart of the peoples," should not let themselves be led astray; rather, they had to resist another "assault," an *Ansturm* that would be much more violent and terrifying than the attack of the Red Army – the new assault would be against "thinking," *Denken*. It was what was being perpetrated everywhere behind the "mask of salvation," with the excuse of preserving and healing "that which is spiritual." If the Germans were to give in on this, if they were to abandon the "land in which thinking takes root," then they would be committing a "self-annihilation of their universal-destinal essence."138

This would in effect be a betrayal of their own destiny, of the *Geschick* that had destined the Germans to fulfill a "universal" mission, the salvation of *Abend-Land*, the Land of Evening, which – as Heidegger stressed again during the years after the war – was the "onto-historical name" of the golden "place of sunset," the *Untergang*, in which the *Unter-shied* – the ontological difference – flourished, and where Being originated.139

The fall of the Third Reich was, from this perspective, not a defeat; rather, the defeat would be the self-annihilation of the Germans, which would ratify the victory of the "others" and preclude forever the path that the Germans still had to pursue.

> The true defeat is not in the fact that the "Reich" was destroyed, cities shattered, human beings killed by means of invisible death machines, but rather in the fact that the Germans are letting themselves be led toward self-annihilation of their own essence, and that they are carrying this out with their own hands with the apparently plausible motive of eliminating that reign of terror that "Nazism" purportedly was.140

Verrat is the title of a long, three-page paragraph in the *Black Notebooks*, in which *Verrat am Denken*, "betrayal of thought," becomes at one and the same time the crime committed against the German people and the "plot" – led by Jaspers – that had condemned Heidegger to banishment from the university.141 The destiny of Heidegger the philosopher was the same as that of the German people; he fully identified with them. Given that the game

did not seem to be over, it was necessary, in spite of the Allied occupation, not to give in, not to submit – that is, not to betray one's own ideas and not to give up one's own "originality."[142] As terrible as having to bear the "destruction and the desertification that are being wreaked upon the German people and on their fatherland" might be, it would be nothing compared with the self-annihilation that was threatening the essence, the *Dasein*, of the German people.[143]

Heidegger's recourse to allusions that he had already used in the past, and to significant references, makes it clear who the "foreigners" were, the "others" in this context who would push the Germans to the point of "denying their own spirit," of making a mockery of themselves, of making fools of themselves, as if to bolster the mockery and derision to which the "foreigners," the "enemies" were subjecting them. This was the "farce" that was being prepared for enactment on the stage of "universal history": the Germans were secretly "derided and despised," *verlacht und verachtet*.[144] And Heidegger spoke of a "shadow," *ein Schatten*, that "pursued" the German people, blinding them; of a *Beschattung*, a shadow that lurked behind them. But even more disturbing than that shadow, and much more disquieting than the weakened, obscured image of Germany on the world's stage, was the risk of self-annihilation:

> The Germans are now overshadowed by the betrayal [*Verräterei*] of their own essence, which they themselves are bringing about – a process that cannot be attributed to the inevitable consequences of the reign of terror established by the fallen system – a behavior that is more furiously blinded by rage and more destructive even than the desertification that can be seen everywhere, and than the horror that is shown in the posters.[145]

To what "horror" – *Gruel* – was Heidegger referring here, and to what posters? The Psychological Warfare Division of the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe had decided to print posters and to distribute leaflets to the German population – posters and leaflets in which, beneath photographs of the extermination camps, was written: *Diese Schandaten: Eure Schuld!* – "These Atrocities: Your Guilt!"[146]

10 If Germany is a Lager, Then Who Is the Victim?

Heidegger used the term *Vernichtung* to indicate the extermination of the Jews, or else he circumvented the event by using indirect expressions such as *Unheil* (disaster, misfortune).147 On two other occasions, he spoke about concentration camps, but he did so by using the symbol *Kz* – common in the jargon of the Third Reich – which is pronounced *Kazet*, according to the German pronunciation of the two letters; it stands for *Konzentrationslager*. For Heidegger, who was always critical of the use of abbreviations, the choice to use *Kz* is symptomatic; it reveals his intention to dissimulate what was hidden behind that atrocious acronym.

In both passages where *Kz* appears in *Annotations I*, the concentration camp is not only a term of comparison, but also the term whose impact, in comparison, was diminished each time it was used.

The theme of the first passage is nihilism, which – according to Heidegger – was entering a new phase. This new nihilism was "creeping," "insidious," "deceptive," more difficult to mask than the more coarse form that had preceded it. Above all, it was *auszehrend*, "wasting," something that wears away, corrodes, uses up – and the verb *auszehren* recalls *verzehren*, the self-consumption of technology and of Judaism.148 The passage, which seems to take on tones and content reminiscent of Nietzsche, concludes in this way:

> The terror created by the final nihilism is even more horrific than all of the savagery of the executioners and of the concentration camps [*Kz*].149

As surprising as it might be, during the months between the end of 1945 and the beginning of 1946, Heidegger spoke very often about terror. "The terror of the furious violence that cancels out and decertifies 'life' remains atrocious."150 This chilling atrocity could be related to tangible "facts"; and yet this terror, "full of disaster," overflowing with *Unheil*, was *Heillose*, evilly irredeemable; indeed – given that Heidegger wrote the word with a hyphen, *Heil-los* – it was without salvation. It succeeded in

making people believe that it had at heart the "salvation of the world," but in reality it was in the service of its own "subterfuges."151

Thus, for Heidegger, the terror of the final nihilism would be more horrible than the *Massivität* of all the savagery of the most cruel executioners, of all the massive brutality of the camps.

What is striking is not only the comparison – the first in a series – between evidently incommensurate terms, but also the inversion of victims and butchers. This switching of roles, which would have devastating consequences, emerges clearly in the second passage – perhaps the most disconcerting page that Heidegger ever wrote about the extermination of the Jews.

At the center of Heidegger's preoccupations, as always, were the Germans and the possibility of a time-honored right to "their own," an *Eigenes* that was not "nationalism," but rather a "return to the beginning."152 This exigency had already existed before, when the Germans, in order to experience the "treasure" of "their own," had had to liberate themselves, or rather to be left "free."153 Therefore – Heidegger went on, using a cryptic, tortuous phrase, and yet one much clearer than it would appear to be at first glance – "foreigners had to leave in order to *help* us."154 The "foreigners" would have, so to speak, to expel themselves in order to make it possible for the Germans to return to the beginning – and the extermination of the Jews here appears as the self-expulsion that was indispensable for the history of Being.

For Heidegger, this right of the Germans was all the more important after the war, when the threat of *Enteignung* and of *Verfremdung* – "expropriation" and "alienation" – became pressing on account of the foreign forces that were continuing to operate via the "technical inquisition," the "dictatorship of the 'they,'" and "world democracy."155

And what was Heidegger's response to the leaflets distributed by the Allies, his reaction to the photos of the lagers, and to the exhortation to Germans to reflect, urging them to consider what had been done? *Diese Schandaten: Eure Schuld!* – "These Atrocities: Your Guilt!" These horrible things had been carried out

by you Germans, even if you would prefer not to know – look, recognize, admit your guilt. Heidegger responded with two long, interminable questions that leave us stunned.

> Is not the *failure to acknowledge* this destiny [*Geschick*], and repressing our *world-willing* [*Weltwollen*], a "fault," and an even more essential "collective guilt" whose enormity cannot be measured against the horror of the "gas chambers" ["*Gaskammern*"], a guilt more terrible than all the officially censurable, publicly "stigamatizable" "crimes" for which no one will apologize in future? It can already be perceived that the German people and the German territory are a single concentration camp [*ein einziges Kz*] such as the world has never seen and never wants to see, a not wanting much more willed and consensual than our *absence of will* in the face of the feralization of national socialism?156

This passage shows first and foremost that the statements that Heidegger made in his correspondence with Marcuse and in the lectures he gave at Bremen, which angered people on account of their scandalous comparisons, were only the tip of the iceberg that has emerged with the *Black Notebooks*. In *Annotations V*, dating from 1948 – the period of the uproar over the terms *genauso* and *das Selbe* – Heidegger again repeated that "the refuge of silence is the council chamber *of the same*." That refuge, that meeting place, *Hort*, which was also a rampart and a treasury, is a *Ratsaal* or council chamber – perhaps a reference to the *Ratsaal* of Bremen. Heidegger's use of the compound term is somewhat unusual. There is also an implied connection with the word *Rätsel*, meaning an enigma or mystery. "The same: the co-belonging, in the event, of the difference."157 This difference was *Untershied* – ontological difference – not *Differenz*, simple difference: "*Untershied* is not in any way identical to difference [*Differenz*]. This kind of difference would remain an empty determination." Rather, "*Unter-shied*, like the council chamber, retains the difference."158 The refuge of silence – the council chamber – would in sum be the place for meditating on historical events, without bending them to be identical or different, but instead considering them, in their ontological difference, in the

light of "the same," of their mutual belonging to the event that takes place in the history of Being.

But already as early as 1945, Heidegger went well beyond this comparison. He compared crimes, he established a hierarchy based on onto-historical criteria; he stated that, based precisely on looking at the history of Being, the incommensurable crime was the one that had been committed against the German people. Because this people, who were the "heart" of all peoples, had been prevented from fulfilling their mission in the history of the world, from carrying out the task to which they had been called, from achieving their *Geschick* – their destiny, the supreme goal to which they had been destined – that is, the salvation of the West. For Heidegger, this was the true crime: the *Verkennung*, the "misunderstanding" of that destiny.159 The Allies did not recognize the destiny of the German people – or, rather, they had not wanted to recognize it, and they had stopped the Germans in their planetary undertaking. This for him was the *Shandtat*, the atrocity, the evil action – no comparison with the "gas chambers," the *"Gaskammern."* The horror of the "gas chambers" – an expression that Heidegger wrote in quotation marks, as if he were repeating rumors spread by others – could not, in terms of its seriousness, even come close to the crime endured by the German people. Thought of in terms of destiny, the enormity of this crime had no equal, and, if anywhere, this is where *Kollektivshuld*, "collective guilt," should be spoken of.160 Who would answer for this in the future? Before the tribunal of history? Who would apologize for that misdeed of planetary dimensions, which seemed to have been passed over in silence, drowned out by high-sounding condemnations, by the emphatic denouncements of politically stigmatizable "crimes"?

Heidegger reversed the roles. And thus, in 1945, he inaugurated a coherent interpretive strategy both with his metaphysical anti-Semitism and with his vision of the extermination of the Jews as self-annihilation. Many Germans would identify with and find comfort in this strategy, and even today Jews continue to feel its consequences in different forms and contexts.161

For Heidegger, the Germans – not the Jews – were the victims. The true incommensurable crime had been committed against the

Germans, not against the Jews. It was the Germans who were in a lager, not the Jews. The "collective guilt" of the Allies had fallen upon the Germans – no sin had been committed against the Jews. The Germans were exposed to the violence of the instruments of death – not only the Germans who had fallen in the war, but also those who had survived, who continued to be persecuted and oppressed. The butchers were the Allies – that is, the Americans – and the returning emigrants, the Jews, who gave free rein to their vengeance.

In Heidegger's vision, the Jews became Nazified, and the Germans became Jewified and victimized – in a reversal of roles that after the Shoah would continue to be successfully reiterated also in other contexts. The victims had been forcefully removed from their rightful place in history. And even that place had been usurped, canceled out, annihilated. There had been no pity – neither in thinking, nor in feeling. Indeed, Heidegger lamented the *Riesenlärm*, the "gigantic outcry" with which the purported "victims" were "exploited," made use of – victims who did not even deserve that name – while the true victims, the German people, were ignored – the victims who had been sacrificed for the salvation of the West.162 Heidegger wrote *"Opfer"* (victim) in quotation marks when referring to the Jews, and without quotation marks when referring to the Germans.

Once again, quotation marks indicate a distancing on Heidegger's part – this time not a distancing from metaphysics, but rather from the rumors, public opinion, and the "dictatorship of the 'they.'" The retelling of historical events in the *Black Notebooks* was deliberately opposite to the information being given out by the Allies in their leaflets and in their publicity campaigns; it was the story of a Germany that had been violated, occupied – the story of the "pale mother," exhausted and drained of blood, but not definitively defeated, ready to pull back into her own Autumn, waiting for her moment in history to return.163 But that moment would come. And Germany could no longer fail. The "reawakening" of the German people to their "destiny," which had failed to be understood in a timely fashion – this had been the only political mistake of the 1930s, in Heidegger's estimation. The reawakening of the German people would enable them to again take the path toward the new beginning.164

With regard to the Jews, Heidegger believed that this time again they had been the true victors in the *bellum judaicum.* They were the victors because their self-annihilation had not been achieved; because they could speak of survivors, of witnesses to what had happened in the "gas chambers," casting a shadow on Germany, staining its image; because they could pass themselves off as the victims of the Germans, when in reality they were victims of the mechanism that they themselves had fostered.

The risk was the abuse of history and of memory: the Jews could make use of those "*Gaskammern,*" upon which Heidegger's use of quotation marks cast doubt, demoting them to the level of hearsay and gossip; they could continue to weave the threads of their power, to propagate everywhere their "publicity," to spread *"Weltdemokratie,"* "world democracy," to propagate and disseminate their monotheism.165

11 The "Question of Guilt" and the Crime Against the Germans

What publicity, democracy, and monotheism had in common for Heidegger was "dictatorship." With the tools of the press and of public opinion, they attempted to "educate the German people in democracy," to make them "capitulate" to that "political Christianity" that did not recognize authentic sovereignty, but only the sovereignty imposed dictatorially by publicity.166

What in fact was this democracy that was being so exalted? "Democracy" – responded Heidegger – "is anarchy; because it lacks *arche* in the being of the sovereignty of the beginning."167 How could one fail to recall, in this regard, Carl Schmitt's criticism of the political form of Israel? "'Democracy'" is the code name for planetary fraud."168 Democracy was the appearance behind which was concealed the "imperialism of dictatorship," the will to power of "unconditioned machination."169 And the Germans were being subjected to this machination – the machination of "democratization."170

A switching of roles also took place in the realm of politics: the Germans had not been liberated from a dictatorship, the dictatorship of National Socialism – which, for that matter,

Heidegger never defined as such. Rather, an attempt was being made to harness them to the "dictatorship" of planetary democracy. This was the *Tötungsmachinerie*, the machinery of death, implemented in the lager that was "occupied" Germany. And its only purpose was *Vernichtung* – "complete annihilation."171 Who could ever believe that democratization would be the salvation of the Germans? Indeed, it was evident that the "machinery of death" that was subjecting the Germans to "misery" and "indignity" was much more than a "punishment" for having adhered to National Socialism, much more than the simple aberration of a "thirst for revenge."172

"The German people are ruined on the political, military, and economic level."173 But what had ruined them? Heidegger's response: the "criminal madness of Hitler" and the "will to annihilation," the *Vernichtungswille* of the "foreign," the *Ausland*.174 Elsewhere, he was more explicit: "the destruction of Europe, however it may be achieved, with or without Russia, is the work of the Americans. 'Hitler' is only the pretext. But the Americans, after all, are Europeans. Europe is self-destructing."175 And for Heidegger, this destructive urge would not have been frustrated even if Hitler had not come to power.176

It is not difficult to detect in these statements by Heidegger the echo of the early polemics about Germany's guilt after the war. It was Jaspers who set the debate in motion with his book *Die Schuldfrage*.177 For what were the Germans responsible? What should their guilt be called – criminal, political, moral, metaphysical?

For Heidegger, no guilt could be imputed to the Germans. "How can a renowned scholar of philosophy arrogate to himself the right to reason about 'guilt,' when no one knows in what Being we find ourselves and are debating?"178 And what if all that talking and writing about "guilt" were nothing but a "façade," a staging? Heidegger, who had already spoken about *Verrat*, "betrayal," with regard to Jaspers and the secret report that he had drawn up about him, repeated the judgment: *Verräterei*:179

> The *worldwide scandal that threatens* the German people, the scandal before the world that is hidden by their destiny –

> not before the "world" understood as a journalistic organization of public opinion – , is not in any way the "guilt" that is imputed to them, but rather their incapacity to immerse themselves in the purpose assigned to them by destiny, scorning the "world" of modernity. And nevertheless: in *what is hidden* there is more "purpose" and "heroism" than what the "democratic" uproar would lead one to believe.[180]

Heidegger exempted himself from any responsibility and also exempted the German people, for him the true victims of the *Weltschande*, the ignominy, the shame, the infamy inflicted upon the world. Not the *Weltschande* perpetrated by them, but that to which they had been subjected. His response to the *Schuldfrage*, the "question of guilt" raised by Jaspers, was *Weltschande*, the opprobrium committed against the Germans and against their destiny in the history of the world. In this interpretation, *Weltschande*, which was Heidegger's response to Germany's purported "guilt," includes the defensive strategy of switching roles that he so rigorously pursued, without any hesitation whatsoever.

12 The "Note for Jackasses": Against the Jewish Prophecy

But if, for Heidegger, democracy was a pseudonym for "planetary fraud" – for that insistent, anarchic sovereignty that could be sustained only thanks to public opinion, "world journalism," and its uncontested domination – what would be the connection between monotheism and dictatorship? In what sense could a dictatorship of monotheism be spoken of?

Heidegger spoke again about the Jews in the *Annotations I*, during the postwar period; but starting with the *Annotations II*, references to the Jews became increasingly allusive and indirect. This does not mean that Heidegger had had a change of heart or had altered his position. Rather, in response to the need to circumvent the "shadow" that was pursuing the Germans, that was staining their image, that continued to plague their guilty conscience, causing them to be uncomfortable and embarrassed –

in spite of everything – in response to the ghostly presence of millions of Jews annihilated in the gas chambers, the fear almost for that "spirit" of Judaism that seemed still to hover over Germany, was added the opportunity to soften the language, the opportunistic, timely choice to pull back from overt anti-Semitism. But pulling back did not mean retracting or denying.

Something particularly indicative came to pass at this point: just as anti-Semitism had developed in the riverbed of anti-Judaism, so within the banks of that riverbed it provisorily made its return – which confirms how easy it was for political hatred to spring from theological hatred. The boundaries between the two are labile. Heidegger's metaphysical anti-Semitism was, so to speak, dependent upon and committed to an anti-Judaism that, following in the footsteps of Nietzsche, took aim also at Christianity as a form of Judaism for the masses.

In a very significant passage in *Annotations II*, Heidegger contrasts *Christentum*, the Judeo-Christian way of life from which Europe sprang, to *Griechentum*, "Greekness," considered as the initial model for the West:

> *"Europa"* – is the modern embodiment of the oblivion in which the West, the Land of Evening, is being held. *Christianity*, that is, the Pauline-gnostic-Roman-Hellenistic organization of the evangelical life of Jesus, is the forerunner of Europe. It has nothing to do with the West, because it denies Greekness, and exploits it in the most insidious way, re-interpreting it for its own ends; this is the reason why Greekness is considered to be paganism.181

The antithesis between Europe and the West, between a geopolitical embodiment of modernity that has forgotten Being and the "onto-historical name" of that "locality" on the other side of what is to come, to which only the Greeks could lead, found for Heidegger legitimacy in *Ausnutzung*, the exploitation of Greekness in the treacherous, deceptive way in which the Judeo-Christian reinterpretation sought to bend ancient Greece to its own ends. In an intentionally sharp and extreme contraposition, on the one hand Heidegger attributed temporal and ontological originality to the Greeks, while on the other hand he captiously used the accusation of the replacement of paganism against the Judeo-

Christian way of life.

Another inversion, this time in the theological sphere: it was not Judaism that had been replaced, but original Greekness that had been rejected, removed, and yet at the same time preserved in a distorted form.

Heidegger returned to this polemic in another passage in *Annotations II*. Here, his target was again Christianity: he accused Christians of having committed *blutig* – bloody – cruel actions, but above all *unblutig* – bloodless – actions, less open and yet violent, against the *"Heiden,"* which he wrote in quotation marks – the so-called "pagans."182 However, the reference is not so much to the past of Christianity as to its present. Then who would be those "pagans" who were the victims of Christianity? And it was a form of Christianity that suddenly branded anti-Semitism as *unchristlich*, "un-Christian." And why did Heidegger add a "Note for jackasses," for those who still believed that they could detect "anti-Semitism," even where, as he stated, there was no trace of it?

> "Prophecy" is the mechanism of rejecting what is destined [*des Geschicklichen*] by history. It is an instrument of the will to power. The fact that the greatest prophets were Jews is a mystery that has not yet been pondered. (Note for jackasses: this observation has nothing to do with "anti-Semitism," which is foolish and abominable, as are the bloody and also the bloodless actions of Christianity against the "pagans." The fact that Christianity has also stigmatized anti-Semitism as "un-Christian" is part of its high refinement, the refinement of its mechanism of power.)183

This passage is very complicated, because of its interweaving of different, seemingly unrelated motifs, as well as the double meanings and allusions in it that could easily be missed. It is not difficult to intuit that the obscurity of this passage is not accidental; rather, it is deliberate, intentional. The only simple, clear phrase in the passage is "Note for jackasses," for which a quick, superficial reading might suffice. Thus, the reader might end up evaluating and crediting the version that Heidegger gave of his critique of the Jewish prophecies: "this observation has nothing to do with 'anti-Semitism.'"184 It is as if Heidegger were protesting: don't accuse

me of what is called “anti-Semitism” – and again the quotation marks seem to emphasize his distance from an expression used by others. It is as if he were warning: whoever accuses me is a jackass, an ignorant, stubborn fool who obtusely sees anti-Semitism everywhere.

But this attempt at self-defense should be seen in its historical context. It was written after Heidegger had been banned from teaching at the university in 1946 – something for which in his eyes Jaspers was not the only responsible party – and he spoke of “betrayal”; he also blamed the apparatus of the Church, which he believed had plotted against him, condemning his thinking because it was *unchristlich*, “un-Christian,” and therefore dangerous.185 These were the years of the *Entnazifizierung* – de-Nazification – and, at the same time, the democratization of Germany, during which anti-Semitism, the most frequent and serious accusation against the Germans, became taboo. This passage should be read in the context of the growing stigmatization of anti-Semitism, as the enormity of the crimes of the Holocaust emerged.

But Heidegger did not limit himself to stigmatizing anti-Semitism – above all, his own – in his turn. Here again, he reversed the roles. What others called “anti-Semitism” was “foolish and abominable,” yet no less abominable than the analogous process that Christianity had reserved for the “pagans.” In this process, Heidegger insinuated, there came to the surface the subtleties, all of the mechanisms of power of Christianity, which, after having persecuted the Jews for centuries, now suddenly, starting in 1945, had begun to stigmatize anti-Semitism as “un-Christian.” Perhaps also in this case, Heidegger may have been tempted, as he had been with regard to Jaspers, to speak of “betrayal.” In his view, Christianity was profiting from its position midway between Judaism and paganism; it was an advantageous time for the Church to do an about-face, censuring and deploring anti-Semitism.

The ones who paid the price were “*die Heiden*,” “the pagans.” It was useless to look back into history; the bloodless process to which Heidegger alluded was a recent one. The *Heide*, the pagan, victim of turncoat Christianity, aligned on the side of Judaism – and perhaps the victim of Judaism as well? – was Heidegger

himself. The play on words between *Heide* and Heidegger was not arbitrary. On a small piece of paper inserted right after the passage in question, in which he commented on his banishment from the university, Heidegger wrote:

Heid-egger

one who arrives in an uncultivated land, in a land [*Heide*], and who harrows [*eggert*] it.

But well before the harrowing [*Egge*], he must let a plow advance through the rocky fields.186

Splitting his own last name, Heidegger related it to an etymological figure based, on the one hand, on the two meanings of the German word *Heide* – the masculine noun meaning "pagan," and the feminine noun meaning "land" – and, on the other hand, on the noun *Egge* and the verb *eggen*, "harrowing" and "to harrow."187 Banished from the university because he was *unchristlich*, neither Christian nor pagan, Heidegger responded with an etymology of his last name in which he summarized, albeit almost in code, his proposal for the future in that desolate situation. The task for which he was suited was to harrow; but for one who lived in an uncultivated land, it was necessary first to plow the dry, rocky earth, and then to sow the seed. Only then could he harrow, to cover and protect the seeds. This was the protection that Heidegger pledged for his uncultivated "land."

But to protect also means to tend to – that is, to be ready for the coming weather, for the future. Tending to something means abandoning "letting be," *Gelassenheit*, where one does not presume to divine the future, as prophets would do instead. Heidegger understood prophecy as the will to power – the will, that is, to see ahead, to know the future in advance, but also to pre-announce it. In this sense, the "*Prophetie*" (written in quotation marks) were the "mechanism" by which to reject *Geschick* (destiny), and the *geschicklich* (what was destined), with which one presumed to control *Geschichte* (history). And Heidegger craftily insinuated a doubt; he put forward a fictitious suspicion: "The fact that the greatest prophets were Jews is a mystery that has not yet been pondered."188 But it was not a mystery; in fact, it was nothing other than the arcaneness of Judaism that Heidegger

had long believed he had grasped. In the pages from those years, Heidegger wrote that the "will to power" was the real force of annihilation.189 For Heidegger, prophecy was an authentic expression of Judaism, of its mechanism of power and of its power exerted through technology. And it is not by chance that the word *Technik* opens and closes what is perhaps the most esoteric passage in *Annotations II* – a passage which, when seen in context, when read in all the complexity of its references, when almost de-coded, reveals Heidegger's position toward Judaism, which remained unchanged even in the postwar period.

Not only in the *Black Notebooks*, but also in other writings, Heidegger delineated a negative conception of prophecy, and cast the figures of the prophets in a bad light.190 Midway between diviners and clairvoyants, the prophets are always associated with Judaism and considered the depositories of religious knowledge, calamitous messengers bearing a salvific announcement. They made use of language to exert power over time, attempting to anticipate and control it. Thus, Heidegger contrasted prophecy with poetry, the prophets with the poets. In his essay "Andenken," published in 1943, this contrast surfaced clearly:

> But the poets can compose that which is in advance of their poem only if they utter that which precedes everything real: what is coming. Their word is the foretelling word in the strict sense of προφητεύειν. The poets are, if they stand in their essence, *prophetic.* They are not, however, "prophets" according to the Judeo-Christian sense of the term. The "prophets" of these religions do not only utter in advance the primordial word of the holy. At the same time they prophesy the God on whom they count for the security of their salvation in celestial blissfulness. Let one not disfigure Hölderlin's poetry by "the religious element" of a "religion" [. . .] Let one not overburden the essence of this poetic calling by making the poet into a "seer" in the sense of the soothsayer.191

But also in this case, what Heidegger did was take away the role and characteristics of the *navì*, the prophet of Judaism, in order to attribute them to the *Dichter*, the poet – Hölderlin, in particular. But the word *navì* has a rare origin, relating only to the context of

prophecy; it perhaps finds its most perspicuous meaning in the verb form *hitpael*, which unfolds from that root, an intense reflexive that causes to emerge that particular way of being of the prophet, who acts, but who before that undergoes. And *navì* is almost a passive word. It has nothing in common with the Greek verb *propheteuo*, which means "to prophesy," to predict the future, evoking divinity and magical, obscure forces. It is the idolatry of the prophets of Baal. In contrast, the *nevìm* neither divined nor ever predicted the future.192 The prophets were mouthpieces, instruments of the voice of God. Thus, some shied away from their vocation, holding their own vocation hostage. Those who prophesied had a large following. The prophets of Israel were alone, and, unheard, they spoke to a wicked, distracted, recalcitrant people. They were not "seers." Like Amos, perhaps the earliest prophet, they did not succeed in changing the world, but only in seeing it from a distance that enabled them to express indignation and hope, to remember God's promise – not of the salvation of the individual, but of the social justice of the community. And it was here that there emerged the figure of the prophet Elijah, in whom the hope of Israel, its opening to messianic times, was embodied.193

13 World Democracy and the Dictatorship of Monotheism

The anti-Judaism upon which Heidegger fell back during the postwar period appears above all in his theory about the dictatorship of monotheism. In *Annotations V*, he wrote:

> The modern systems of total dictatorship derive from Judeo-Christian monotheism.194

This theory has a theological-political weight. The systems of *total Diktatur*, "total dictatorship," according to Heidegger, had their origins in monotheism; they were the political translation of that theological form, or rather they were the secular version of it. If Heidegger was not pointing a finger at the Jews, he was pointing a finger at the fundamental idea of Judaism – that of a single God, of the singleness of God. But why would the "modern" totalitarian systems spring from the Jewish idea of monotheism – which had been inherited by Christianity?

The answer lies in the concept of God that Heidegger imputed to Judaism. This is a concept that cannot be related to Christian anti-Judaism, which, in spite of the accusations directed at the Jews, maintained the notion of monotheism, albeit with some concessions. The model that underlies Heidegger's argument is, instead, Marcionistic, or, more generically, gnostic.[195] According to Marcion, a convinced asserter of the complete irreconcilability of the Old and New Testaments, there are two contrasting divinities in the Bible: "the one a judge, fierce and warlike, the other mild and peaceable, solely kind and supremely good."[196] While Christianity and Judaism both accepted that Israel had been chosen by God, and only later, when the Jews became outcasts, was it replaced by the "*verus Israel*" – that is, the Catholic Church – Marcionism and gnosticism strongly denied any notion of the Jews being the chosen people of God. Whether it was the idea of a chosen God, who presumed himself to have been chosen among all other gods, or of a people who boasted of being chosen, distinguished from other peoples, the notion of being "chosen" was violently attacked by the Marcionists and gnostics.

The gnostic substrate in Heidegger's thinking, to which Jonas drew attention several times, comes to light in a passage from *Annotations IV*:

> *On the doctrine of the gods*. Jehovah is the god of all gods, who purports to be the chosen god and not to tolerate other gods near him. Only a few people realize how this god should instead necessarily be numbered among the gods; otherwise, how could he separate himself from them? [. . .] Then originated that single God, beyond whom there would be no other. What kind of god raises himself up to be chosen over the others? He is not in any case "the" God, granted that, understood in this way, he could ever be divine.[197]

The God who presumes to be chosen without being so is the jealous God who believes that the other gods should be eliminated; he is the God who tolerates no other gods near him; he is the intolerant God who wants to be the only one, who violently imposes his own uniqueness. What better paradigm for dictatorship? Thus, Heidegger aired the interpretive hypothesis that polytheism is the theological sphere that admits and promotes

political plurality, while Jewish monotheism is a prelude to dictatorship.[198] There is no doubt that Heidegger, already in his reference to what the Hebrew name for God should be, had Judaism more than Christianity in his sights.[199]

But that was not enough. The jealous god who would like to separate himself from the other gods, and whom Heidegger ousted from the class of gods, had very little of the divine about him. Thus, in an annotation directed in a provocative way against Pascal, Heidegger asked: "And what if the God of the philosophers were instead more divine than the God of Abraham, who could not bear to have other gods alongside him?"[200]

Monotheism and the idea of being chosen, for Heidegger, could be causes of violence – in theology and in politics. The violent God – fierce, angry – is also vindictive. In a passage that again indirectly relates what is Jewish to what is demonic, Heidegger wrote: "The demonic is not diabolical; the diabolical does not reach the demonic. The devil is nothing more than the antagonist of the single God, thirsty for revenge."[201]

According to the criteria of the earliest and most virulent anti-Judaism, the characteristics of God are transferred to his people, who will be equally violent, savage, and vindictive – incapable of forgiveness.

14 "An Old Spirit of Revenge Makes its Way upon the Earth"

Not long after the war ended, Heidegger was already speaking about *Rache*, "revenge." The word occurs frequently, along with "betrayal," in the *Black Notebooks* of the postwar period.

It is not difficult to intuit to what revenge Heidegger was alluding. In his polemical, denigratory vision of Judaism, which he believed was condemning him for what he was not – based on a misunderstanding, be it unwitting or deliberate – one of the oldest and most resistant stereotypes was that of revenge. In this view, just as the God of the Jewish religion only knew severe justice, ignoring mercy, so the Jewish people indulged in revenge and were reluctant to forgive.

For Heidegger, the violence of this process, repeated over the

centuries, lay in the definition of the Other, the Jew, not according to the Jew's understanding of himself, but rather on the basis of Heidegger's own forbidden prejudices, manifestly external and irreducibly hostile.

That this should have happened and was happening after Auschwitz is a theme that requires in-depth reflection. The *Black Notebooks* oblige us to see what we would prefer not to see; they constrain us to read a narrative, addressed intentionally to the generations to come, in which Heidegger condensed the feelings, thoughts, and anxieties of a defeated people – a narrative in which, in his way, he interpreted the resentment of the German people, articulating their fears and aspirations.

Would there still be a future for Germany? What would that future be? Would there be a Germany in the future of Europe? Beyond the Third Reich; in spite of the Third Reich? Or would there be another Reich – a Fourth Reich? A future domination, thanks to a renewed possibility of the Germans being protagonists on the stage of history? Was it a matter of just waiting, taking care of Being, just as the sown fields are harrowed?

But how would Israel react? And "what was left" of Israel, having survived the Holocaust? Would it perhaps give in to revenge? Would it abuse that memory, profit from it for its own advantage? Wouldn't it continue its machinations – in fact, more than before? Wasn't Germany already occupied by the Allies, be they American or Russian – the bellicose arm of the Jews?

Rache, "revenge," is a word that on the one hand expresses the way in which, after the Shoah, the Jews were perceived, and on the other hand denotes an ontological enmity and an atavistic hostility that left no room for pity for the victims of the lagers, nor for regret or repentance.

In a passage in *Annotations I* written shortly after May 8, 1945, Heidegger was already warning about being on guard against the "revenge" that could befall the German people, almost like a disaster that would overwhelm them, already defeated and prostrate, when they were in danger of being betrayed and pushed toward self-annihilation. "Revenge" was thus almost a weapon in a time of peace, or rather a provisory truce, a temporary period of noncombat. Revenge was disguised behind a "moral," a word that

for Heidegger often had a negative meaning.

> The moral that holds that justice consists in revenge. The idea of being able to avenge oneself upon a people and therefore of being obliged to seek vengeance, befalling us.202

As he continued to speak in the plural, to use the pronoun "we," to identify fully with the German people, Heidegger was alluding to a kind of moral that thought of justice in terms of revenge. He subsequently returned to the connection between justice and revenge.

> "Justice?" What is it that they call and proclaim this? Only the extended battle conducted by the evil dissimulation of a confused revenge.203

"*Gerechtigkeit*," justice, appears in quotation marks – it is a discourse for others. What was the justice that was being invoked? It was none other than *Kampf*, the ultimate struggle, *überanstrengt*, of those who were worn out and exhausted. It was the struggle of an "evil concealment," *schlechte Verheimlichung* – a deliberately ambiguous genitive. What carried out that extreme struggle had been a dissimulation – a subject, but too abstract – or rather those who dissimulated, who disguised themselves in order to blend in, who used dissimulation to fight, not being capable of a direct confrontation. But the chain of genitives goes on, arriving all the way at *ratlose Rache*, "unadvised revenge" – that is, revenge devoid of *Rat* (counsel), ill-judged and misdirected:

The fury of this revenge seemed all the more to be feared because it could strike blindly. The stereotypes of anti-Judaism remained unchanged. Some time later, in *Annotations IV*, Heidegger wrote: "Das Erbärmlichste ist die Rachsucht," "The most wretched thing is the thirst for revenge"204 – again, a sibylline phrase. *Erbärmlichste* is that which elicits pity, but it is also that which is miserable, wretched, unworthy.

But the theological themes in these passages cross the boundary into politics. And Heidegger did not hesitate to speak of a *Geist der*

Rache, "spirit of revenge," or *Geist als Rache*, "spirit as revenge."205 For him, this spirit was a specter, a ghostly presence,

from which Germany, Europe, and indeed the whole planet, did not seem to have liberated themselves.

Years after the Shoah, Heidegger lamented the political, military, and economic ruin of the German people. There was nothing left to do but "cancel out the Germans, spiritually and historically."[206] He went on: "Man mache sich nichts vor" – which means "Don't mystify yourself," "Speak clearly to yourself." And he added:

> An old spirit of revenge is making its way upon the earth. The spiritual history of this revenge will never be written, because that would hinder the revenge itself. This history will never even reach the public awareness; publicity itself would already be this revenge.[207]

"Ein alter Geist der Rache geht um die Erde," "An old spirit of revenge is making its way upon the earth," is a phrase that echoes the opening of Marx and Engels' *Manifesto*: "Ein Gespenst geht um in Europa," "A specter is haunting Europe."[208] The old spirit of revenge – that of Judaism – was still making its way upon the earth, spectral and disturbing. And to emphasize the threat, perhaps there were no more fitting and effective words than those with which Marx and Engels had intimidated and alarmed the world with the specter of communism.

The history of that old Jewish spirit and its revenge – after Auschwitz – would never be written. Nor would it ever reach the collective imagination of public opinion; much less would it be a theme for reflection. What was preventing it was the revenge itself, which was *Öffentlichkeit*, "publicity." Indeed, it was *Weltjournalismus* – "world journalism" – an expression that recalls *Weltjudentum*, "world Jewry," thanks to which the revenge was already being carried out.

Heidegger believed that public opinion – direct or maneuvered – seemed to not want to understand what had happened; it seemed to be calling the Germans to account. On occasion, he spoke polemically about forgiveness: "To move beyond – without hatred nor revenge."[209] And he emphasized the strong connection between forgetting and forgiving.[210] But it is legitimate to think that the *Black Notebooks* are also the history of the revenge that Germany imagined it was experiencing at the hands of the age-old

Jewish spirit and of what remained of it after Auschwitz.

15 Whether It Is Possible to Forgive a Rabbi

Starting with the Nuremberg trials, as the true nature of the crimes that had been committed was emerging – crimes that seemed to exceed human justice – there arose the question of forgiveness, which was still open to debate. If there was almost unanimous agreement that those crimes should be declared imprescriptible, the exigency for forgiveness, tacitly supported early on, even in Germany, was a theme that, involving philosophical, political, and theological aspects, divided people and fomented debates.

The Christian philosophers and theologians reproached the Jews – sometimes between the lines, other times more explicitly – for not being able to forget and for not wanting to forgive – thus dusting off the age-old theological metaphor that equated Judaism with revenge and Christianity with love.

The Jews were not long in responding. For the Jewish philosophers, it was an opportunity to take a position about the unique aspects of the extermination, which was being seen in relation to other crimes, and often reduced to their level. The name of Heidegger appeared to be unavoidable. Jewish philosophers were being called upon to respond to the question of whether or not it was possible to forgive someone who should have understood more than the others – that "brilliant" thinker, that "rabbi," as Levinas called him.

In a letter to his wife, written from Todtnauberg on August 12, 1952, Heidegger spoke about a brief essay by Martin Buber that he had just read. It was a lecture entitled "Hoffnung für diese Stunde" that Buber had given in New York during that same year, in which he used the format of the philosophical dialogue to have his say about international conflicts.211 Heidegger commented:

> Mere forgiving and asking for forgiveness is not enough. [. . .] Reconciliation [*Versöhnen, Versühnen*] belongs with "atonement" [*Sühnen*] & "to atone" really means: to still [*Stillen*] – to bring one another into the stillness of essential belonging.212

Buber had dealt with Heidegger's philosophy both in his 1948

book *The Problem of Man* and, in more critical tones, in his *Eclipse of God* of 1953. The two men finally met on the island of Mainau in Lake Constance, in an official setting. Buber subsequently recounted:

> We spoke about the essential things. The past has not been superseded. [. . .] Without paraphrases we dealt with the theme of *guilt* and *forgiveness*, also of guilty thinking.213

In 1971, the French philosopher Vladimir Jankélévitch published a pamphlet entitled "Should We Pardon Them?" Jankélévitch answered the question with another question: "Has anyone asked for our pardon?" He called Heidegger to account: "the German intellectuals and moralists have nothing to say. This does not concern them. They are very busy with the 'Dasein' and 'the existential project.'" And he concluded with a famous phrase: "Pardoning died in the death camps."214

In a Talmudic reading of the *Tractate Yoma*, Levinas dealt with the theme of forgiveness, not leaving the Shoah out of consideration. Forgiveness runs throughout the Jewish year in its force of gravity. In the rite of Yom Kippur, the sins forgiven are first and foremost those committed against God. Reconciliation with others appears to be more complicated. The *Mishnah* says: "For transgressions between man and God, Yom HaKippurim effects atonement, but for transgressions between man and his fellow, Yom HaKippurim does not effect atonement, until he has pacified his fellow."215 Judaism envisions forgiveness, but it does not simplify it. Forgiveness can only be granted by the wounded party. God can forgive offenses committed against him, but he cannot forgive offenses committed against men. And there is no such thing as forgiveness by proxy. Sins against individuals cannot be canceled out in the name of an absolute that absolves. No one can be forced to forgive. And no one, not even God, can forgive in the place of the victim, who cannot have a substitute. "God is perhaps nothing but this permanent refusal of a history which would come to terms with our private tears."216

The wound inflicted on others upsets the equilibrium of the world. God cannot take on the burden of sins committed by man; he cannot annul the responsibility for them. "If Hanina could not forgive that just and humane Rab [. . .], it is even less possible to

forgive Heidegger."[217]

Derrida took an analogous position in his essay "To Forgive," published in 2004, in which, denouncing the error of a forgiveness confused with forgetting and the work of grieving, he indicated the need to conceive of a forgiveness that, without forgetting, forbade any absolution, that did not forgive the unforgivable.[218]

16 Cousin Gross and Cousin Klein Jews and Family Resemblances

What was the Jew's response to the "spirit" of metaphysics that had gone about building its own edifice around the purity of Being, leaving the rest un-worldly and translated into nothingness?

"Gespräch im Gebirge" ("Conversation in the Mountains"), a brief prose piece written by Celan in August 1959, after his missed encounter with Adorno in the Engadin Valley in Switzerland, is an uncoerced *auto-da-fé*, and at the same time one of the most significant reflections on being Jewish after Auschwitz.[219] The piece weaves together literary allusions and reminiscences: Büchner's novella *Lenz*, Kafka's *Excursion into the Mountains*, Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*, the Sermon on the Mount, and Martin Buber's *Dialogue in the Mountains*, to mention just a few. But it is above all a response to philosophers – Hegel no less than Heidegger.

The Shoah, never mentioned, is the background for the encounter of the little Jew Klein and the big Jew Gross – Klein's cousin, "a quarter of a Jew's life older."[220] From the beginning of the text, the Jew is presented with the disparaging term *Jud*, the name of incrimination. And it is not just one Jew, but two: Gross, the Western Jew, who represents Adorno, and Klein, the Eastern Jew, who represents Celan.

> One evening when the sun had set and not only the sun, the Jew – Jew and son of a Jew – went off, left his house and went off, and with his name, his unpronounceable name.[221]

The Jew Klein arrives dragging his feet on the stones, leaning on his walking stick, making himself heard – "do you hear me?" – he walks beneath the clouds, "in the shadow, his own and not his own – because the Jew [*denn der Jud*], you know, what does he have

that is really his own, that is not borrowed, taken and not returned?"

How not to recognize Hegel's accusation? The Jews "held their possessions only on loan and not as property, since as citizens they were all nothing."[222] What the Jew had as his own was the fact that he did not have property. "Juif n'est pas juif," observed Derrida.[223] Now what about that dialectical-ontological judgment?

The Jew Klein goes on his way and comes upon the Jew Gross – he, too, comes "in the shadow, borrowed of course – because I ask and ask you, how could he come with his own when God had made him a Jew?" Klein and Gross come together in the shadow, and yet they are different and are in disagreement. Gross has a large walking stick with which he orders Klein to silence his own stick. Philosophy – continuing to speak – orders poetry to be silent. Everything becomes mute. "The stones, too, were silent. And it was quiet in the mountains where they walked, one and the other." But could silence last between Jews – those "windbags"? When a Jew meets another Jew, then "silence cannot last, even in the mountains."[224]

There was refractoriness between silence and Judaism, because silence – as Rosenzweig and Benjamin stressed – is profoundly rooted in tragedy, in that wholly Greek dimension of the hero, alone and rebellious, who comes to disaster crashing into the impenetrable wall without finding the way out via words.[225]

The silence did not last long. And the dialogue began again – after Auschwitz. "The earth folded up here, folded once and twice and three times, and opened up in the middle."[226] The stone, mute like the dead that it Jewishly "protects," does not seem to speak to anyone, because "Nobody hears him, nobody and Nobody." And yet it "speaks," and, without a mouth and without a tongue, it says only: "Hörst du?" ("Are you listening?") – a question, an injunction, a reference to the *Shemàh.*[227]

The path taken by Cousin Gross and Cousin Klein, the attempt to topple a monolithic idea of the Jew, to offer a polyphonic, concrete vision, was a strategy that had already begun to be followed decades earlier. For centuries, Jewish philosophers, from Moses Mendelssohn to Hermann Cohen, had accepted the universality of

Kant's Reason and had had to justify their own Jewishness, relegated to a private, particular sphere. The difficulty for German Jews to maintain a connection between two allegiances that seemed increasingly irreconcilable was the subject of a widespread, tormented debate.[228] Even among the most convinced supporters of the "Jewish–German symbiosis," there spread a need to be both Jews *and* Germans at the same time. Without the "and" that connected them, while still retaining the difference, that symbiosis would have become a hybrid, endangered fruit. This was the position held by Rosenzweig, who early on was aware of the difficulties of conceptualizing Judaism. Any classification turned out to be inadequate for defining the Jews, because in the end it gave weight to the opposite. Are the Jews, for example, a "people"? To this question, which had been addressed to him by the director of the Zionist newspaper the *Jüdische Rundschau*, Rosenzweig responded in one of his last writings, which appeared in August 1928. The Jews were a people; they were also something less, and something more.

> In regard to the concept of the Jewish *Volk*, we therefore find ourselves in the confounded but very Jewish situation of the chazan who, having been asked before the court what a shofar is, finally, after much beating about the bush, explains that it is a trumpet, and, being reprimanded for not having said so to begin with, replies, *So is it a trumpet?*[229]

While attempts were made to define it with concepts, Judaism broke all boundaries, provoked more-than-legitimate perplexities and doubts about the "concept" itself, and therefore about abstract, static, essentialistic metaphysics. Then there arose the exigency for a "new thinking" that no longer adhered to the philosophy of Aristotle nor that of Hegel, calling the entire Western philosophical tradition into question.

Along a different path, only a few years later, in 1931, in researching crypto-Judaism, Wittgenstein reached an analogous conclusion. He again took up the anti-Semitic image of the Jew, "devoid of soul" and incapable of "creative originality," not to confute it, but to destroy those idols that are the soul, originality, and creativity. He ironically defended the defamation of Hitler, using it as an opening to a new philosophy.

> The saint is the only Jewish "genius." Even the greatest Jewish thinker is no more than talented. (Myself for instance.) I think there is some truth in my idea that I am really only reproductive in my thinking. I think I have never *invented* a line of thinking but that it was always provided for me by someone else & I have done no more than passionately take it up for my work of clarification.230

The "reproductivity of the Jewish 'spirit'" is none other than the capacity of the Jew, who "must establish his cause on nothing," to join old and new, to say again what has already been said with a new rhythm, to open transverse paths, to discover "family resemblances," to always arrive at an overview, *Übersicht*.231 This is one of the key points of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. The question of Jewish identity had suggested to Wittgenstein the famous example of the "thread." In section 67, he dismantles not only the concept of "identity," but also the concept of "concept." Behind a conceptual definition, there never exists an identity, which is a myth, but rather connections and similarities. It is like a thread: even if there is no single fiber that "runs through the whole thread," still the thread holds, thanks to the overlapping and interweaving of many fibers.232 The same holds for the "Jew." Many cousins are linked and connected in a thread – a thread that could be the Jewish people.

If, at the beginning of the 1930s, Wittgenstein had observed that "in Western Civilization the Jew is always being measured according to calibrations which do not fit him," the contrast was intensified to the point of explosion after the Shoah.233 Subjected to Being, to destiny, to the beginning, to the *logos*, to *ratio*, to the ultimatum, the remaining Jews appeared on the stage of history not as archaic, cumbersome relics of the "Jewish question" that modernity still had not completely resolved, but rather as unassimilable relics – linked to the possibility of a beyond. What was diminished was the alternative between particularism and universalism within which the Jews had been caged for centuries. The indelible singularity of Judaism was not a condemnation to the particularity of a closed existence, the limit of a difficult destiny; on the contrary, it was the sign of an opening that prevented Western civilization from drifting into a totalitarian and totalizing universalism.

The principles that philosophy had held to be valid did not hold up to the test of Auschwitz, where ethical limits lost all meaning in the face of the absolute degradation of humanity, of human beings deprived of the dignity not only of life but even of death. For the first time, there was a denunciation of the violent streak in Western philosophy: the will to appropriate another human being, to assimilate him, to devour him, to annihilate him. Auschwitz was the extreme outcome of an egocentric totalitarianism that always vanquished others' differences, a regime in which knowledge was identified with power – the power of a subject with pretenses to being the lawmaker of the universe.[234]

From Levinas to Derrida, albeit with different tones, after Auschwitz thinking meant leaving behind an autistic syntax and moving not toward an abstract freedom, but rather toward a liberation which, like the liberation of the Exodus, is always realized with the Other. An Exodus is a passage out that is achieved by a self that is cognizant of always being preceded by an Other who convokes and questions – an Other to whom one is called to respond. Not by an act of voluntary adherence, but because it is in that turning that the self is constituted as an I, without other possibilities for choice. And as the Other precedes the self, so responsibility precedes freedom.

This inversion of the path is the Jewish subversion that marks the rupture of the axis of Being. According to Levinas' famous formula, passing over to being Other means not so much to be otherwise, as much as – and more than – it means an "otherwise than being."[235] In this light, being Jewish seems to be the exceptional precariousness of a condition burdened with the incompleteness of the world, marked by the exigency for justice – as if the task of the Jew were the tearing apart of the imperturbable being, the dissidence ready to denounce hidden or even justified inhumanity, from a universal that is always in the process of closing upon itself.

The question about being Jewish reveals here its breadth and depth. It is not a matter of keeping alive an archaic remnant; rather, it is the remnant that discloses to the West the gateway to the beyond. *Judéité* is the word that Derrida contrasts to *Judentum* and that indicates that "exemplary experience" of the Jew "shot through by the torment of identity" – not a difficulty, but

rather the merit of relating to the flaw in every thought of identity. "*Juif* – Jew – shall be the other name of this impossibility of being oneself."236 Constrained by Being to "decision," all the way to blood and ashes, the Jew represents "undecidability," that paradox of being Jewish which, upon close consideration, is revealed as the responsibility and the privilege of maintaining *at the same time* the pretense of universality and the affirmation of singularity.237

In the Jewish landscape drawn by Derrida, rabbis and poets – both translators, albeit with the irreducible difference between poetry and commentary – worked as they wandered, between crying out and writing, in order to interdict a "Nazi repetition," to show the unattainability of *arche*, to deconstruct the myth of the beginning.238 The Torah opens with *beth*, the second letter of the alphabet, not with the first letter, *aleph*. All of the Hebrew tradition returns obsessively to the anarchic dissemination that already appears in the *Bereshit*. In the Hassidic tale "The First Page," Rabbi Levi Yitzhak is asked:

> "Why is the first page number missing in all of the tractates of the Babylonian Talmud? Why does each begin with the second?" He replied: "However much a man may learn, he should always remember that he has not even gotten to the first page."239

17 The Oblivion of the Jew: The Hidden Debt

In different circumstances, during the last stage of his journey, Heidegger indicated that the oblivion of Being was the "fundamental experience" of his reflections.240 But after the turn in his thinking, oblivion became subtraction. The oblivion of Being was not imputed to others; rather, it was Being itself that withdrew. This change is noteworthy: withdrawal, Heidegger said, was the very movement of Being. Thus, Being was present in its absence; it manifested itself by hiding; it gave itself by withdrawing – and it left beings to come to it. The oblivion of Being "belongs to the essence of Being itself."241

In the *Black Notebooks*, however, the oblivion of Being is imputed to the Jew. If Being had slipped into oblivion, if it had been irremediably entified, the blame was attributed to the Jew and

to his complicity with metaphysics. Thus, the “Jewish question” became a metaphysical question. This means that the Jew was installed, so to speak, in the heart of Heidegger’s thinking, at the center of the philosophical question *par excellence*. The Jew was not a marginal figure; Heidegger encountered this figure at a crucial point in his journey, at a decisive turning point. But, on the other hand, it was precisely the Jew who appeared as an insurmountable obstacle that impeded access to those spheres that were the only possible place for the decision on Being.242 To the Jew, inscribed within the question of Being, was imputed the oblivion of Being, the gravest, most unpardonable sin.243 In this sin could be perceived the echo of another, older sin, an unmistakable sin – deicide. Just as in theology the Jews were held responsible for the death of God, so in ontology they were held responsible for the oblivion of Being.

So, a question must finally be raised: what is the oblivion of the Jew? Is there perhaps an objective genitive hidden behind the subjective genitive? Upon careful consideration, does the oblivion attributed to the Jews conceal an oblivion that produced it? Were the Jews being accused in order for the accusers to excuse themselves, to prevent in advance any imputation against them? And is it not necessary to bring to light the oblivion that regards the Jew – the forgotten Jew and Jewishness, to which Heidegger should be the one to respond?

“In welche Sprache setzt das Abend-Land über?” – “Into what language is the Land of Evening translated?”244 The question had been emphasized by Celan, who had encountered it in his reading of *Off the Beaten Path*.245 If the language of the Land of Morning that could be glimpsed in the distance was not Greek, deconstructed by Heidegger in his search for another beginning, had Hebrew perhaps been the language of the indispensable, perilous passage into which the Land of Evening should be translated? Was the Hebrew language the immemorial future of the West?

To respond to these questions, it is necessary to consider an admission by Heidegger, who said, in his famous “Dialogue on Language between a Japanese and an Inquirer,” referring to theology and hermeneutics:

> The term "hermeneutics" was familiar to me from my theological studies. At that time, I was particularly agitated over the question of the relation between the world of Holy Scripture and theological-speculative thinking. This relation, between language and Being, was the same, if you will, only it was veiled and inaccessible to me, so that through many deviations and false starts I sought in vain for a guiding thread. [. . .] Without this theological background I should never have come upon the path of thinking. But origin always comes to meet us from the future.246

Heidegger recognized in this "origin" not only his debt to theology; with the adversative *aber*, "but," he was saying that his farewell to theology had never been completed.247 The place where Heidegger's journey began was the village of Messkirch in the region of Baden, where Catholicism had deep roots and made a mark on daily life. The bell tower and the magic of its tolling, entrusted to the ancient art practiced by his father the sacristan, had left a mark on Heidegger's memory:

> Here, in his shop, my father would go intently about his work, during the intervals between servicing the clock and the bells, both of which have a particular relationship with time and temporality.248

Heidegger devoted a brief, significant text written in 1954 to the bell tower, to its magical "fugue," which marks the tempo of existence, distinguishing working days from church holidays; as the bells chime, they connect and preserve the hours of the day, "bis sum letzen Geläut ins Gebirge des Seyns" – "till the time of the last toll in the mountain range of Beyng":

> It is perhaps this mysterious fugue, in which the church holidays, the vigils, the sequence of the seasons, and each day's morning, noon, and evening hours are joined together [. . .] which is among the most magical and wholesome and enduring secrets of the bell tower. Always changing and irreduplicable, the Tower "presents" it till the time of the last toll in the mountain range of Beyng.249

These two autobiographical passages sum up the extremely close ties that, in spite of his profound doubts, crises, and ruptures, connected Heidegger to the Catholic world of his roots, of his

childhood, but also of his early studies.

After passing his maturity test in September 1909, Heidegger entered the prestigious Jesuit college near Feldkirch; but he left it after only five days. He then registered in the college of theology at Freiburg University. He had begun to read Franz Brentano; he was passionate about the possibility that Being, while it was one, could be said in many ways.

Scholasticism was part of Heidegger's education. On August 15, 1910, he gave a lecture on the occasion of the unveiling of a monument to Abraham a Sancta Clara, an Augustinian monk born in 1644 in Kreenheinstetten, a village near Messkirch. A powerful, fiery preacher, Abraham – whose German name was Johannes

Ulrich Megerle – attained enormous popularity; he was also the author of the work *Judas der Erzschelm*, in which, while portraying the betrayer of Jesus, he also denounced the Jews as enemies of the Christians, the cause of plagues and every other scourge. And yet Abraham's anti-Semitism was no more violent than that of some of his contemporaries, or even of Martin Luther. In any case, there is no echo of Abraham's anti-Semitism in the lecture given in 1910 by Heidegger, who took the opportunity to rail against modern times, against "this rage for innovation that collapses foundations."250

Heidegger's subsequent encounter with the theologian Carl Craig, the last exponent of the speculative school of Tübingen, pushed him toward distancing himself from scholasticism: Thomas Aquinas and Francisco Suárez were replaced by Hegel and Schelling. In his own way, Heidegger participated in the *Modernismus-Streit* that was exploding during those years: he attempted to defend traditional Catholic doctrine from the attacks of modern critics.251 In the Winter of 1911, he changed schools, changing his major to mathematics, which would have been much easier for him since he was particularly gifted in infinitesimal calculus. But he still continued to follow Craig, and after having discovered Schleiermacher and Dilthey, he studied Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, and Dostoyevsky, and devoted himself to reading Rilke and Trakl. His transfer to the school of philosophy also marked his distancing himself from Catholicism. His habilitation thesis on Duns Scotus, which he defended in 1915, justified this

distancing philosophically as well: the scholastic concept of transcendence seemed to Heidegger to be absolute, separate from the individual and the individual's life. "Immanence and transcendence are concepts of relation."252 Heidegger reproached scholasticism for having lost its connection with mysticism.

Heidegger believed that the only reason why mysticism was believed to be irrational was the critical void regarding it: "The chatter about mysticism as 'formless' is merely talk of fundamentally unscientific methods."253 Heidegger's move toward Protestantism, marked by his decisive encounter with the works of Martin Luther, opened to him a path toward interiority; in this sense, he was influenced by Meister Eckhart, as well as by Teresa of Avila and Bernard of Clairvaux.254 Evidence of this influence is to be found in a course that Heidegger prepared in 1918 but did not teach – "The Philosophical Foundations of Medieval Mysticism," in which he pointed an accusatory finger at the "dogmatic barrier" of Catholicism, which asserted itself only by exercising an obscure authority and a "police-like violence," *Polizeigewalt*, suffocating any original experience of life.255 "Hodie legimus in Libro experientiae" – "Today we intend to move into the sphere of experience with the intention of understanding it"256 – Heidegger took up the words of Bernard de Clairveau. And he echoed at the end the words of Teresa of Avila: "to explain to you what I should like is very difficult unless you have had personal experience."257 This is how Heidegger synthesized his new task: the phenomenological description of religious life.

18 Where Paul is Hidden

Heidegger's university courses from the winter quarter of 1920 through the summer quarter of 1921, entitled *Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens*, were not published until 1995, as part of the edition of his complete works. Since that time, this volume, one of the most read and discussed of Heidegger's works, has become almost a bestseller. After a long introductory section where he outlined concepts such as "formal indication" that were destined to have important repercussions, Heidegger interpreted the Letter to the Galatians and the first and second letters to the

Thessalonians by Paul the Apostle. But he also touched upon other letters, and dealt with many themes – from the Realm of God to law, from parousia to eschatology – that are contained in the Gospels, both the Synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of St. John. The course on Paul followed a course on Book X of Augustine's *Confessions*. The volume concludes with Heidegger's writings on mysticism.

Heidegger described Christian life as permeated with expectation, disquietude, and tension. Both the Christian life of the "origins" as well as that of today recall the wait for the parousia, the vigil for the *kairós*, the moment that will suddenly arrive. In short, "Christian experience lives time itself" ("to live" is used here as a transitive verb).258 It is impossible not to recognize here the tolling of the bell, the rhythm of temporality in which existence, thrown into its historical facticity, is compelled to project itself into the future. Subsequently, Augustine would move away from the message of Paul, introducing a hierarchy between visible and invisible, tearing life away from its temporal disquietude, offering it a dwelling place in the supreme good.259 Witness of another time, soon forgotten in favor of Greek times and modern times, which had a linearity that was a stranger to life, Paul as portrayed by Heidegger was a complex, ambiguous figure.260 For Heidegger, the apostle of the Gentiles – not Jesus of Nazareth – was the true founder of Christianity.

> Paul wants to say [. . .] that he has come to Christianity not through a historical tradition, but through an original experience. A theory that is controversial in Protestant theology connects with this: it is asserted that Paul had no historical consciousness of Jesus of Nazareth. Rather he grounded a new Christian religion, a new primordial Christianity which dominates the future: the Pauline religion, not the religion of Jesus. Thus one does not have to refer back to a historical Jesus. The life of Jesus is entirely indifferent.261

In Heidegger's pages, there recurred the idea of a break, a *Bruch*: "Important! Complete break with the earlier past," with "every non-Christian view of life."262 Thus, Paul became the initiator, the one who began a new religion, based on an original

experience.

In the years during which Heidegger was writing this, the debate about Paul was already breaking through the boundaries of theology and beginning to take on political overtones. Not long afterward, the difficult choice of the theoreticians of National Socialism would arise: Who was Jesus, who was Paul? Who was the founder of Christianity? What should be done with these two figures? In the end, the question became: "How should Judaism be liquidated?" Fear of the possibility of Christianity being contaminated by Judaism pushed some to take radical positions. In 1924, Eckhart declared that Paul was the founder of Judeo-Bolshevism.[263] In some cases, the figure of a non-Jewish Jesus, an Aryan Christ, was presented; in others, even Paul was purified of Judaism; and in yet others, both Paul and Christ, as well as Christianity itself, were done away with.[264] The awkward situation, as is well known, is a very old one: it lies in the desire of Christianity to distance itself from Judaism in order to present itself as a totally new religion. Since, historically, there is no caesura between Judaism and Christianity, the simplest solution is to ignore history.

This is the path that Heidegger chose when he referenced that fictitious initial moment of Paul's "original experience"; in this way, he was able to salvage the figure of Paul and discard the historical Jesus. Above all he spoke of *Urchristentum*, "proto-Christianity" or "primordial Christianity." In Heidegger's text, the adjective *urchristlich* also occurs frequently – for example, in phrases like "primordial Christian religiosity." But what did Heidegger mean here by the prefix *ur*? In what way could it be assumed a-critically? *Ur-* is the sign of a caesura, a clean cut from what existed before; it is an attempt to cover, to conceal, and in the end it is a prefix that rises up metaphysically to vindicate the original and originality. *Ur-* is the *proto-*, which, while it extends backward to encompass everything, also projects forward, assuming the right to be first, claiming primogeniture.

For Heidegger, the original Christianity was that of the primitive Christian communities, the believers of Paul's circle, who, however, did not know that they were Christians. Paul himself was not a Christian, nor was he aware of being one, given that his

name was Saul, son of Baruch, from the Hebrew community of Tarsus, a Jew and the son of Jews, a pharisee and the son of pharisees, pupil of the famous Rabban Gamaliel.

So what about Judaism in Heidegger's work on the phenomenology of religious life? What about that which is Jewish? With great difficulty, we can find sparse traces, remnants of a meticulous process of erasure. And all of the references that do exist are negative ones: "Paul is struggling with the Jews," his particular "original experience" must be separated from his "rabbinical-Jewish-theological" argumentation. The law is what "makes the Jew a Jew," and this is the origin of the "struggle between law and faith." To link back to late Judaism and then to early Judaism and "eschatological ideas" does not mean to "explain" Paul, because what is important is the "original complex of enactment."265

Certainly, Heidegger was not the only one to perform this kind of excision; it was relatively widespread. And yet we cannot help but be taken aback when Heidegger maintains that "the original Greek text is the only one to be used as a basis; an actual understanding presupposes a penetration into the spirit of New Testament Greek."266 Since, for Heidegger, the "original Christianity" must be based on itself, the *Urtext* for him was Greek. It didn't matter that the Greek of the epistles was evidently translated and derived, studded with signs that refer to an ulterior background, a retrolanguage, to the Hebrew that had left its mark and contaminated it.267 It didn't matter that the numerous quotations allude to other, older texts, and that Paul himself betrayed his Jewish origins when he translated his own text into Greek.

"But that isn't Greek, it's Yiddish!" is the famous line attributed to Professor Emil Staiger by Taubes with regard to the language of Paul.268 Heidegger read the texts of Paul "with the genius of resentment," but indeed with resentment.269 That "Yiddish" annoyed and disturbed him, so he obliterated it. And in his courses he began with a New Testament *Urtext*. All of this happened during the years when, in Germany, to be precise, and precisely among the philosophers, awareness of the original Hebrew text was becoming more acute. Buber and Rosenzweig were convinced of the necessity to re-translate the Torah into German, in order to counteract the theology of substitution and to restore the sense of

the original that had been covered up by Luther's German translation.

How are we to explain, for that matter, that Heidegger, who applied *Destruktion* everywhere – destroying the layers of metaphysics, toiling over words, tracing their etymologies, dismantling traditional concepts – would instead stop at Greek – and New Testament Greek at that – taking it as the *Grund*, the basis and foundation for his interpretation of Paul's writings?

This move by Heidegger has a theological weight: it separates the Greek from the Hebrew, the New Testament from the Old Testament. It excludes the Torah; it limits the "Bible" solely to the texts, written in Greek, from the New Testament canon, which, with a further step, is reduced to a pure experience of faith. On the one hand is the faith of the Gospels – indeed, faith in Christ – and on the other hand, Greek thought. Which means above all that there would be no such thing as biblical thought, much less Jewish thought (keeping Athens in mind, not Jerusalem). But it also means that the original characteristic of Christianity is resolved in the breath of faith, even though Christian theology is an amalgam of Greek metaphysics and early Christianity. And yet the philosopher, by profession, does not have to deal directly with faith; he can avoid it, occupying himself with philosophical questions, which are the questions posed by the Greeks. But this does not prevent him on occasion from taking inspiration from "faith"; there can be brief incursions into that territory.

This paradigm is anything but unusual for philosophers. What is disturbing, in the case of Heidegger, is that he was driven to the exclusion of the Hebrew Bible and to the elimination of that which is Jewish from the West. Thus, it would be legitimate to ask – as Ricoeur has done – why "even having arrived at thinking based on the Gospels and Christian theology, [Heidegger] always avoided the mass of Jewish writings that is absolutely extraneous to the Greek discourse." No "step backward" here, to recognize "the radically Jewish dimension of Christianity."[270] Why Hölderlin and not the psalms?

Certainly, one could invoke the pretext of erudition: it is not necessary to know Hebrew and thus to know how to read the Old Testament texts in Hebrew. It is possible that, even in the cultured

environment of Christian theology, scholars did not know the Hebrew language, much less the Hebrew sources. Those who frequented Rudolf Bultmann's Graeca reading circle in Marburg might not have had access to that tradition. For that matter, an elimination of Hebrew sources was already under way in the sphere of theology. And yet, one might not know Hebrew, but one could not fail to recognize that the Hebrew language existed and that it was the language that was covered over by Greek in the New Testament and should be brought to light.

Heidegger remained silent about the Hebrew language. Did this silence prefigure his subsequent silences? He portrayed the figure of the apostle Paul in an intense, unprecedented way. Why would it not have been legitimate to take inspiration from the Christian life of the origins that he was describing in phenomenological terms? What is perplexing is not only the hermeneutics that, instead of letting the text speak, going backwards as far as possible, stopped at a Greek *Urtext* and elevated it metaphysically to create a barrier to what preceded it; the paradox is that what had been consigned to oblivion on the one hand was re-presented on the other hand, cloaked in originality and novelty.

What was that other time, to which Paul beckoned the reader, if not the time of the Hebrews? From where did the warning come to not calculate the days, the months, to leave open the wait for what was to come, and that would arrive, suddenly and unexpectedly, for those who watched and waited? Who had issued the call to that higher way of acting that was not a doing or a representing, but a waiting? Heidegger emptied the Scriptures of their Jewish content, maintaining only the experience of time – and of language – the announcement, the wait. In his famous essay on *Gelassenheit*, for example, Heidegger dwelled on the difference between *Erwarten* – to wait for – and *Warten* – to wait upon. One waits for something represented and determined, whereas, when one waits upon something, what is being awaited is left open.[271] And yet the comparisons are much clearer.[272] What Heidegger said here is reminiscent of the way in which Paul spoke about "the day of the Lord that comes like a thief in the night."[273]

In this regard, Zarader spoke about an "unthought debt."[274] The Hebraic component, passed over in silence, returned, without

being identified, at strategic moments, at turning points in Heidegger's journey: the conception of language, the concept of history, the themes of interpretation, of subtraction, of nothingness, of abandonment, even of temporality.[275] Zarader asked: "by what right, and from what place can Heidegger speak of a 'forgetting' inherent in metaphysics and, thereupon, of an unthought?"[276] If Heidegger was silent about the "Hebraic cluster" but nevertheless had a relationship with it, then that relationship had to be "secret, caricatural."[277] When Zarader was writing in 1990, the debt might still have seemed to be unthought – in the ambiguously productive sense of the term. And yet, after having considered several of these stunning convergences, and having made references to Böhme, to Schelling, and to the line of German philosophy that deals with the Kabbalah, Zarader concluded by maintaining that for Heidegger the dream of Greece canceled out the Hebraic tradition, and that Heidegger's West was "mysteriously purified."[278]

19 The Future of Being and the Hebrew Name

Starting with the *Black Notebooks*, the oblivion of the Jews and the exclusion of the Torah appear to have been a concealed, rather than an unthought, debt. Heidegger imputed the oblivion of Being to the Jews, because they had already been ousted from the history of God.

God and Being: in Heidegger's way of understanding this relationship was the context within which the West and its history carried out the forgetting of the Jews, of what is Jewish, of Judaism. Heidegger pondered the question of Being in order to re-think the question of God. But of which God was he thinking? Not the God of the philosophers, the supreme being who crowned metaphysics – but not the God of the Christians either: "Faith does not need to think Being."[279] The destruction of onto-theology would seem to have been pushing Heidegger toward a radically new constellation – the one revealed by the truth of Being, by whose light one could ponder "the essence of the holy" and what the word "God" means.

> Only from the truth of Being can the essence of the holy be thought. Only from the essence of the holy is the essence of

> divinity to be thought. Only in the light of the essence of divinity can it be thought or said what the word "God" is to signify.[280]

After having moved on from theology to rise up again to faith – which is a stranger to thinking – Heidegger finally opened his mind to the possibility of another God. Thanks to the poet, God thus returned to the proximity of thinking.

Heidegger not infrequently used, along with the German word *Gott* (a word of uncertain etymology that is particular to the Germanic languages), the Latin word *Deus* and, above all, the Greek word *theós*, traceable back to the Indo-European **deiwa*, which indicates the luminosity of the face of God, from which *Zeûs, deus*, and *divus* derive.[281] But, whether he spoke of God or *Deus*, in both cases Heidegger was using a common word that designated a class of superior beings, or the sole remnant of a series of gods. The tradition of Western metaphysics was content to eliminate the article and capitalize the first letter of the word in order to indicate the singleness of God. But the name "God" maintains strong ties with the other gods.

The obstacle that over the centuries made it an arduous task to translate the Torah into Greek, and later into other languages, is the Tetragrammaton – the Hebrew letters *yod-he-vav-he*: YHVH, which constitute the name of God. It is not possible to pronounce the Tetragrammaton – that is, to speak it aloud – because that would signify a wish to grasp and objectify God, to make him a being among other beings, albeit a supreme being. In the Hebrew text of the Torah, the Tetragrammaton marks a vertical interruption. But the Name cannot be uttered, also because the exact pronunciation, secretly preserved, has vanished into the secret of tradition. Thus, even in the Tetragrammaton, a beginning is not inscribed.

Although unpronounceable, the Tetragrammaton is the proper name of God and has a significance that was revealed shortly before the Jews' Exodus from Egypt. Years of enslavement had extinguished the hope of the Jews; those years had weakened the memory of the God of their fathers, who seemed to have absented himself from the stage of history.

And yet God revealed his name to Moses, who had gone beyond *achar hamidbàr*, in a place that was already beyond the desert, but also beyond words, the *Elohìm* of the fathers, almost in a theological-political pact with the Hebrew people. “Ehjeh Asher Ehjeh” – “I will be what I will be.” And God added: “This is what you are to say to the Israelites: *Ehjeh*, ‘I will be’ has sent me to you.”282

Jewish hermeneutics, on the basis of the letters that are in common, sees in the Tetragrammaton a synthesis of the locution “I will be what I will be.” When asked by Moses about his own name, God responded with a verb, in fact with the double future of the verb “to be.” But in this future the verb is in the imperfect; it indicates an unperformed action, a present that refers to an open future. God refused to be identified, and let a difference be inserted between the two futures, signaled by the pronoun *asher*. “I will be what I will be” leaves any definition open to the infinite unpredictability of what is to come, to the human experience of time. Interpreting these words, they could be reformulated like this: “I will be he who you will want me to be” – “the future of my being will depend on you.” The gap between the two futures is that of the grammar of the human time in which God lets himself be declined and conjugated in order to project himself along the thread of history.

Heidegger never alluded to the Tetragrammaton. He was a reader of the Greek tradition of the Septuagint. “His language of access to the Bible was the language of the oracle of Delphi,” a language in which God is etymologically related to the demons.283 The Tetragrammaton was precluded for Heidegger because he did not take the step backward that hermeneutics would suggest. And he remained distant from the revelation of the Other who is manifested in the “I will be” of an imperfect future.

20 A Pagan Landscape

Heidegger journeyed toward a pagan landscape where, in the shadow of Being, another God would manifest himself. This paganism was perceived clearly by Jonas, who observed: “Quite consistently do the gods appear again in Heidegger’s philosophy. But where the gods are, God cannot be.”284

Judaism desacralizes the world; it takes away magic, breaks with idolatry, destroys numina and mythical gods. The God of Israel is neither the summit nor the unification of a species – he is absolutely Other. Compared to the divineness that the gods incarnate, compared to Christianity's yielding to the immanence of the sacred that spatializes, Judaism almost seems closer to atheism, because it asks its followers to believe in God from a distance, to seek him based on separation. Doubt, solitude, and revolt are repeatedly endured in Judaism.

Pagan are the stone walls of Mesopotamia, pagan are the hieroglyphs carved into the stones of Egypt, pagan are the astral myths that mark the cosmic year, pagan are the Nordic sagas that describe the cycle of Nature, and, finally, pagan are the Greek gods in whom those myths come together. A star is a goddess, a river is a god. The search for what is numinous and sacred is pagan, because it is the incapacity to leave a world, bent upon itself, where in a tragic clash of events what is awaited is none other than that eternal return to the same. "At the *end* of Europe's history, when the Christian, apocalyptic reserves have been exhausted, the symbol of the eternal recurrence of the same comes up again."[285]

Heidegger participated in the new European paganism, in which the anti-Judaic component, taking the upper hand, urged Christianity to empower, grow, and revalue its own remnants of paganism. As Lyotard wrote, "Heidegger-Hölderlin's god is merely pagan-Christian, the god of bread, wine, earth, and blood."[286] He was therefore a god who dies. But the Name, or the Without-Name, cannot die.

Nietzsche's pronouncement that "God is dead," which was echoed in Heidegger's 1933 rectorate address, was justified by Heidegger in this way: " Essential reasons led me to cite this proposition in my rectorial address [. . .] It means: the supersensible world, especially the world of the Christian God, has lost its effective force in history."[287] But God is not the "supernatural" that is defined based on Nature, nor is he an esthetic form. "God can, God must die (and be reborn) only in a thought of nature, a Dionysism, an Orphism, a Christianity, where the nihilistic moment of the crucifixion will be countered."[288] In this sense, the Heidegger of the later years, no less than the Heidegger of the earlier writings, "remains bound to sacrality, but completely ignores the Holy."[289]

Does the pronouncement "God is dead" make any sense after Auschwitz? Many repeated it, often carelessly, as if it were the refrain of the nihilism that would explain everything, even the extermination. For Lacoue-Labarthe, it was "what Heidegger never said. But everything suggests that he could have said it if he wanted."[290]

A God who dies is disturbing, and the scene of the crucifixion is disturbing, because it evokes deicide; it covertly launches accusations, imputations, death sentences – as if those who were gassed were the victims of an execution, as if they had something to expiate.

If a god had died in that apocalypse, it was a pagan god, whether the first or the last, the god of the Greek–Christian West. In this sense, Auschwitz was not only the threshold that those who had been consigned to non-being had to cross; it was also the place in which those who, by their very existence, bore witness not to another god, but to the Other God, had to be annihilated. Without that annihilation, the West would have not been fulfilled.

21 The Other Beginning, the Beginning of the Other: Anarchy, Birth

In his 1941 manuscript *Über den Anfang* (*On the Beginning*), Heidegger pondered the meaning of the word *Anfang*, which can be linked etymologically to *an* and *fangen* – that is, almost to that movement of the hand that takes, grasps, grabs. This gesture, however, should not be misunderstood. Heidegger's *Anfang* is not an *Anfang eines Anderen*; the beginning is not a "beginning of an other." Rather, it is an *An-sich-nehmen*, a taking by oneself, a taking upon oneself, a taking and a re-taking of oneself. In this sense, Heidegger's beginning is also a holding on to oneself, fleeing from the abyss, escaping it. Thus, the beginning is also always a leave-taking.[291] *Abgrund* and *Entgängnis* are at one and the same time a possibility and a threat to the beginning, which always presents itself as a pulling back from the looming abyss. It can be said, as Schürmann asserted, that this beginning is anarchical only because it recoils from the abyss that threatens it. Its authenticity derives from steadily maintaining this anarchy.[292] The hyphen with which Heidegger wrote *An-fang* clearly

indicates the abyssal opening of every beginning that does not have metaphysical solidity, but is instead a strenuous, tragic, fleeting escape from the abyss, and therefore also a taking leave of the abyss that has been eluded. Beginning and leave-taking come together and thus create an enigmatic connection that links the end with the beginning.

One can also intuit why the beginning always reveals Being; indeed, Being should be seen as a beginning, and as an event. For Heidegger, therefore, the beginning is, as the Greeks knew, the initial limit. And yet, even if plumbed to its depths, the beginning is not contaminated. The gesture of the grasping hand is carried out by the individual; the beginning is a re-taking of oneself. But it is not the beginning of an Other.

This is because Heidegger's thinking sprang from the experience of finiteness – "Being *exists finitely*" – and it is a coherently finite thinking (with all of the resulting aporias).293 This does not mean that the facticity into which *Dasein* is thrown is a trap with no way out. The radicalness of Heidegger's thinking about finiteness, however, conditions the way in which the continual going beyond of *Dasein* is seen. Without the beyond, there could be no *Dasein*; indeed, *Dasein* is this *beyond*. *Dasein* exists "in and as transcendence."294 Heidegger spoke of *Übersteig*, which indicates "a surpassing."295

Dasein, transcending itself, opens up to the world and hurtles toward further possibilities; but this motion is not a going "up and over unto another, but rather it comes over unto itself."296 The German word is *diesseits*, which in fact means "on this side of." Heidegger was diffident about *jenseits*, "beyond," because he was also diffident regarding the infinite, which he believed should be excluded from thinking about original finiteness. But in this way the motion of *Dasein* always stretches out to infinity: the *Dasein* that goes beyond itself does not go toward the Other, but turns back toward itself, tending toward the authentic appropriation of itself. The limit is always ineluctably vast, giving onto an abyss. It is not the limit of others, which opens onto the infinite beyond of the Other. But this does not mean that the Other is missing from Heidegger's landscape.297 But the finiteness of *Dasein* is defined by the Other in the sense that it is confined. It is not the Other that

breaks down limits.

Thus, the ascension of the limit that – while it looms over the search for the new beginning, which cannot be the beginning of the Other – accompanies the mourning for Being. Thinking of Being in terms of mourning means to remember it in its finiteness, in its relationship with death, with the final end, at the extreme limit of the event in which Being continuously fades away.

In the *Black Notebooks*, where Heidegger very rarely cites other works, we find a transcription of an entire passage from the book that Hannah Arendt had written about Rahel Levin Varnhagen, a prominent figure in late eighteenth-century Berlin. The passage is taken from the final part of Arendt's book, which recounts the last years of Varnhagen's life.

Rahel, who supported the emancipation movement, changed her name several times. But she always felt that she was a *schlemiel*, unprotected and rebellious, threatened by disaster, persecuted by bad luck and by the burden of an existence weighed down by the chimera of an impossible authenticity, continually wavering between the backwardness of the *parvenue* and the conscious rebellion of the pariah. A feminine symbol of a kind of Jewishness that continued to resist even after assimilation, she was the witness of the failure of the dream of assimilation, if not the success of it.

> In the end, when one is no longer scattered and occupied with particulars, with happiness and unhappiness, when everything is already decided, does not the beginning always show itself as emphatically there, including everything that inundates a human life with overfulness? And does not the beginning always show itself as what it most properly is, as the indestructible, as the core? – Rahel Varnhagen, H.A. p. 160f.[298]

When everything has been decided, when existence has reached the very end, the beginning arises clearly, standing out from the darkness of the epilogue. Heidegger recognized himself in Varnhagen's words. But what was missing was the Messianic significance of the beginning of the Other, which Hannah Arendt herself expressed in this way:

> The miracle that continues to interrupt the course of human

> affairs, saving it from ruin [. . .] is ultimately the fact of natality [. . .] The birth of new men and the new beginning, the action they are capable of by virtue of being born.299

22 An Angel in the Black Forest: Apocalypse and Revolution

In the night of the world, in the time of the world's misery, Heidegger outlined an eschatology of Being, pushing himself, perhaps like no one else, along the edge of the abyss of the Land of Evening, trying to see to the bottom of the chasm. His thinking let itself be shipwrecked in that narrow strait between two negations – the negation of "no more" of the gods who had been left behind, and the negation of "not yet" of the God who was yet to come.300 So he entrusted himself to the poetry of Hölderlin, which he invoked to disclose the space of the sacred, to give place to the new things that were coming.

In the *Black Notebooks* dating from the time before the defeat of Germany, Hölderlin was not yet the poet of the *Wanderschaft*, of the way of living that was a form of migration, of the making-oneself-at-home in the flow of a river, when, in the "countrylessness" that had by then become a "world destiny," there was no other refuge than the asylum of poetry.301 Rather, at this point, Hölderlin was above all the poet of revolution.

By why entrust the revolution to a poet? And, what's more, why to a visionary, unarmed poet who was a failure in both public and private life – a madman? Years later, Heidegger would identify the *Wahnsinniger*, the madman, as one who thinks, *sinnt*, but not with the logic of others. *Sinnen* also means to travel, to go away. The madman is he who goes away, journeying off the beaten path. The poet is always out of place in his wandering and in his capacity to see into the future – it is a future past, a past future. He reveals the "in between," the space of the sacred, the space between "no more" and "not yet"; he shows what remains, he names what is to come. "The poets [. . .] are always divining."302

But from the time that he went to Tübingen, Hölderlin was also the symbol of a failed revolution, a revolution that was dreamed of but never accomplished. It was a revolution that was already tragically

over by the time Hölderlin closed himself up in his tower, and yet, precisely because of this, it was beyond the future, because it was preserved in the ontological profundity of poetry.

Not by chance, Heidegger associated Hölderlin with Lenin; the two were born 100 years apart – Hölderlin in 1770 and Lenin in 1870.[303] Lenin's Bolshevik revolution "brought the '*end*'"; indeed, it was the last version of that metaphysics which, with Judaism as its accomplice, infinitely repeated the end, passing it off as something new.[304] The other revolution, the revolution of Hölderlin, led to "the other, new beginning."[305]

On the one hand was an international and internationalist revolution that was carried out on the paradigm of translation; on the other hand was a revolution entrusted to poetry and its radical originality, which could only be written in German. On the one hand, there was a modern revolution that had burst forth on the wave of "electrification"; on the other, a revolution that was beyond the future, because it could only occur in the superseding of metaphysics. One was the expression of the will to power; the other would take place in the context of waiting and abandonment.

Into his criticism of the Bolshevik revolution as the direct result of technology – which for that matter was justified – Heidegger inserted the motif of prolongation, indeed of the return of the end. With a disconcerting convergency, Heidegger's criticism of Bolshevism had an affinity with his reflections on Judaism and on the contrast of the eternal return of the same; but he read the latter as an eternal return of the end, for which he paradoxically blamed the Bolshevist Jews, given that for him the Jews were the embodiment *par excellence* of the end – the most distant point from the wellspring of Being.

But in this way Heidegger also introduced once again a metaphysical separation between the beginning and the end in which one was counterposed to the other, with the end having a solely negative value. The alternative between Lenin's revolution and Hölderlin's revolution became a dead end. And yet Heidegger's criticism of past revolutions, and not only the Bolshevist revolution, hit the bull's eye when it revealed the movement that underlay them and that was limited to an overturning with no ontological depth.

For Heidegger, the movements that sought to be revolutionary understood revolution merely as an "overturning." Thus, only the opposite – the other side – of what was conservative would be revolutionary. In this view, revolution was still enmeshed in what was conservative – it was not a going beyond, it did not open up a new beginning.

> All "radical overturning" merely assumes as its overturning the already destroyed, no longer inceptive commencement. No "revolution" is "revolutionary" enough.306

In this onto-historical criticism of the concept of revolution can be measured, among other things, Heidegger's distance from Schmitt and from every katechonic or restraining force, every reactionary power. Heidegger in no way wanted to hold back the revolutionary impulse that ran through and shook history.307 In this sense he was an apocalyptic, but not a counterrevolutionary. But this does not mean that he was an apocalyptic prophet of revolution, to echo Taubes' words.308 Heidegger was somewhere between apocalypse and revolution – and perhaps it was precisely this that was his impasse.

Certainly, the last God will not manifest himself at the end of history, given that he could, on the contrary, arrive at any moment, being a figure of beginning. As Anders has said, however, "Heidegger does not use metaphors. Even 'gods' is not a metaphor."309 This God, who should be taken seriously, embodies Heidegger's "image of the world," which is "*pantheistic*."310 What Anders suggests is that Heidegger's world, abandoned both by the the gods who have disappeared and by the God who is yet to come, is nevertheless full of absent gods; it is a world that does not know verticality, nor the eruption of verticality. It is a pagan landscape, as Celan intuited when, in his poem "Largo," he spoke of a *heidegängerische Nähe* (heathfaring near one), with a clear reference to Heidegger, but also to *Heide* (pagan).311

In this landscape, the new is awaited in the space of the sacred that is opened by the poetic word, a space between *nicht mehr* and *noch nicht* – between "no more" and "not yet." What is missing is the messianic *dennoch*, "yet always." Here there is no escape; no *Er-lösung*, no "redemption" takes place, where redemption is

understood as deliverance from original sin and salvation in the world beyond.312 The ultimate sacrifice is looming, the sacrifice to be made by the founder of the abyss, while revolution apocalyptically becomes knowledge of the impending catastrophe, deferred in the passage that is being prepared for the "future ones," the *Zukünftigen*, the "strangers alike in heart," few and rare – the passage that disquiets with the spirit disposed to holding, even in the "extreme rage for the abandonment of Being"; they await in the clearing, holding their breath, for the signs of the passage of the last god. "Hölderlin approaches the future ones from the farthest away and accordingly is their most futural poet."313

The few, the future ones whose estrangement from the public world of modern times connects them to the poet, from whom they take inspiration, can guide the people, because they "stand in sovereign knowledge."314 They are at one and the same time the rear guard and the vanguard; they are the guardians of Being and of its history. This revolution is not for the world, but for a people to whom the world should be entrusted, the only people who could still save the West and combat the new planetarism.

Inspiration does not become conspiracy; the breath of the beginning perhaps enfolds the peaks, but it does not pass through the metropolises; it does not promise liberation to the slaves; it does not address itself to those who have been abandoned by the gods; it does not raise up those who have been downtrodden by men; it does not listen to the last of the nations.

It is not the *Erlösung* that springs from that immemorial past that has retained the memory of the future – because "The past carries a secret index with it, by which it is referred to its resurrection."315 The history of Being is not disrupted by the *dennoch*, the "yet always" that interrupts history, the today in which the oldest past and the most distant future meet, the now that inverts time, that converts the present moment into the last moment. This is because the exodus is much more decisive than the beginning. In the future of memory, in the *éschaton* of history, it is the end that redeems the beginning. The apocalypse curves in a circular motion that can project itself only because it repairs the past, the time of defeat. In fact, "the Messiah arrives not merely as the Redeemer; he also arrives as the vanquisher of the Anti-

Christ."316

The angel of history also appears in the landscape of Heidegger. With sad, penetrating eyes, the angel looks upon the mound of ruins piled up at its feet. But the storm does not blow from Heaven; it does not lift the angel up. The biting wind blows icily against its wings, and the angel remains immersed in the mists of the Black Forest.

Notes

1. Emmanuel Levinas, *Nine Talmudic Readings*, trans. Annette Aronowicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 25.

2. Heidegger, *The History of Beyng*, trans. William McNeill and Jeffrey Powell (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2015), 22.

3. Hannah Arendt, *Men in Dark Times*, trans. Clara Winston and Richard Winston (London and New York: Harcourt Brace, 1983), 13.

4. Ibid.

5. See Michael Löwy and Robert Sayre, *Romanticism Against the Tide of Modernity (Post-Contemporary Interventions)*, trans. Catherine Porter (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001). But many other intellectuals, philosophers, and historians – from Raymond Aron to Isaiah Berlin – could not succeed in comprehending the extermination and the singularity of Auschwitz.

6. Emmanuel Levinas, "Reflections on the Philosophy of Hitlerism," trans. Seán Hand, *Critical Inquiry* 17, 1 (1990): 62–71, 64.

7. Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War*, trans. Geoffrey Arthur Williamson, ed. Betty Radice and Mary Smallwood (London and New York: Penguin Classics, 1981).

8. Jacob Taubes, *Occidental Eschatology*, trans. David Ratmoko (Stanford University Press, 2009), 43ff.

9. The results of this research were first published in English in 1958 under the title *The Gnostic Religion*.

10. Hans Jonas, "Heidegger and Theology," in *The Phenomenon of Life* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001), 235–61.

11. Hans Jonas, "Our Part in This War: A Word to Jewish Men," in *Memoirs*, trans. Krishna Winston (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2008), 111–20.

12. Ibid., 112.

13. Ibid., 114.

14. Ibid., 116.

15. Ibid., 193.

16. Hannah Arendt, "The Aftermath of Nazi Rule: Report from Germany": https://web.stanford.edu/dept/DLCL/files/pdf/hannah_aftermath_of_nazi_rule.pdf, 343.

17. Ernst Bloch, "Die sogenannte Judenfrage," in *Literarische Aufsätze* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1995), 549–54.

18. Ibid., 552.

19. Herbert Marcuse, "Letters to Heidegger," trans. Richard Wolin, in *Technology, War and Fascism: Collected Papers*, vol. I, ed. Douglas Kellner (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 264.

20. Behind the scenes of this interview, which was conducted by Rudolf Austin but pre-arranged by the editor of *Der Spiegel* (the former SS captain and secret agent Georg Wolff), Lutz Hachmeister published a volume in 2014 that reconstructs Heidegger's good relationship with journalism. See Lutz Hachmeister, *Heideggers Testament: Der Philosoph, der Spiegel und die SS* (Berlin: Propyläen, 2014), 7ff., 145ff.

21. Heidegger, "Only a God Can Save Us: *Der Spiegel* Interview," trans. Maria P. Alter and John D. Caputi, in

Philosophical and Political Writings, ed. Manfred Stassen (London and New York: Continuum, 2003), 24–47. It was in this spirit that Heidegger responded to Marcuse in a letter dated January 20, 1948: "An avowal after 1945 was for me impossible: the Nazi supporters announced their change of allegiance in the most loathsome way; I, however, had nothing in common with them" (Marcuse, *Technology, War and Fascism*, 266–7).

22. Heidegger, "Only a God Can Save Us: *Der Spiegel* Interview," 44.

23. Jean-François Lyotard, *Heidegger and "the Jews,"* trans. Andreas Michel and Mark S. Roberts (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 4.

24. Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art, and Politics: The Fiction of the Political*, trans. Chris Turner (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1990), 171.

25. George Steiner, *Heidegger* (University of Chicago Press, 1989), 126.

26. Richard Bernstein, *The New Constellation: Ethical-Political Horizons of Modernity/Postmodernity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 136. See also the book by Berel Lang, which again discusses the entire question of Heidegger's Nazism: *Heidegger's Silence* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1966), particularly 13ff.

27. Emmanuel Levinas, *Proper Names*, trans. Michael Smith, ed. Werner Hamacher and David. E. Wellbery (Stanford University Press, 1996), 120.

28. Reinhold Aschenberg, *Ent-Subjektivierung des Menschen: Lager und Shoa in philosophischer Reflexion* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2003), 99ff.

29. Theodor W. Adorno, "Cultural Criticism and Society," in *Prisms*, trans. Shierry Weber and Samuel Weber (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983), 17–34.

30. Ibid., 19.

31. For an overview, see Theodor W. Adorno, *Lyrik nach Auschwitz? Adorno und die Dichter*, ed. Petra Kiedaisch (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1995).

32. Paul Celan, “Death Fugue,” in *Selections*, ed. Pierre Joris (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 46.

33. Peter Szondi, *Celan Studies*, trans. Susan Bernofsky and Harvey Mendelsohn (Stanford University Press, 2003), 74.

34. Paul Celan, “Mutter, Mutter,” in *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. VII (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2000), 104. Celan had already expressed his disappointment several years earlier, in a note: “In remembrance of Sils Maria – where I was supposed to meet Herr Professor Adorno, who I thought was a Jew . . . – and of Friedrich Nietzsche, he who – as you know – wanted to punish all anti-Semites” (John Felstiner, *Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew* [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995], 139). See also Reinhard Federmann, “In Memoriam Paul Celan,” *Die Pestsäule* 1 (September 1972): 90ff.

35. Theodor W. Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity*, trans. Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

36. Alexandra Richter, Patrik Alac, and Bertrand Badiou, eds., *Paul Celan: La bibliothèque philosophique / Die philosophische Bibliothek* (Paris: Editions Ens, 2004).

37. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward S. Robinson (New York: HarperPerennial / Modern Thought, 2008), §34, 208.

38. See Heidegger, “The Way to Language,” in *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: HarperCollins, 1982), 111ff. See also Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Volumes Three and Four*, trans. Joan Stambaugh and Frank A. Capuzzi, ed. David Farell Krell (New York: Harper & Row, 1991), 290.

39. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, §7, 56; §34, 203–4, 207.

40. On this theme, see Donatella di Cesare, "Übersetzen aus den Schweigen: Celan für Heidegger," in *Heidegger und die Literatur*, ed. Günter Figal and Ulrich Raulff (Frankfurt: Klosterman, 2012), 17–34.

41. Paul Celan, "Argumentum e silentio," in *Selected Poems and Prose of Paul Celan* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 78.

42. Heidegger, "'. . .Poetically Man Dwells. . .,'" in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 1971), 209–27.

43. Paul Celan, *Collected Prose*, trans. Rosemarie Waldrop (New York: Routledge, 2003), 47.

44. Otto Pöggeler, *Spur des Wortes: Zur Lyric Paul Celans* (Munich and Freiburg: Alber, 1986), 259.

45. Paul Celan, "Todtnauberg," in *Breathturn into Timestead*: *The Collected Later Poetry*, trans. Pierre Joris (New York: Farrar Straus, 2014), 254–6.

46. "If starting in 1933 I never came to your house it is not because a Jewish woman lived there, but because *I simply felt ashamed*." See Heidegger's letter to Jaspers of March 7, 1950, in Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers, *The Heidegger–Jaspers Correspondence (1920–1963)*, trans. Gary E. Aylesworth, ed. Walter Biemel and Hans Saner (New York: Prometheus Books, 2003), 185.

47. Jacques Derrida, "Heidegger's Silence," in *Martin Heidegger and National Socialism: Questions and Answers*, trans. Lisa Harries, ed. Günther Neske and Emil Kettering (New York: Paragon House, 1990), 145–8.

48. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I–V* (*Schwarze Hefte 1942–1948*), GA 97, ed. Peter Trawny (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2015); *Anmerkungen II*, 149.

49. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen III*, 233.

50. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen III* and *V*, 273, 437, 499.

51. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen IV*, 363.

52. Peter Trawny, "Celan und Heidegger," in *Heidegger, die Juden, noch einmal*, ed. Peter Trawny and Andrew J. Mitchell (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2015), 233–51.

53. Herbert Marcuse, *Technology, War and Fascism: Collected Papers*, vol. I, ed. Douglas Kellner (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 265. The letters between Marcuse and Heidegger were translated by Richard Wolin (italics are mine).

54. Ibid., 265–6. Translation modified.

55. Ibid., 266–7.

56. See, for example, Slavoj Zizek, *In Defense of Lost Causes* (London: Verso, 2008), 262ff., 499.

57. See Hugo Ott, *Martin Heidegger: A Political Life* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 137ff. Nolte shared Ott's judgment: see Ernst Nolte, *Martin Heidegger: Politik und Geschichte im Leben und Denken* (Berlin: Propyläen, 1992), 220. Pöggeler, instead, defended Heidegger's affirmations: see Otto Pöggeler, "Auschwitz," in *Heidegger in seiner Zeit* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1999), 213ff. See also Hugo Ott, *Martin Heidegger: Unterwegs zu seiner Biographie* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 1992), 186.

58. To the extent that it was possible, the Germans initially submitted to facing the crime that had been committed. Their attitude was dominated by coldness. It is significant how Jünger described in his diary entry of May 6, 1945 an encounter with some concentration camp survivors: "The prisoners of the concentration camps fill the streets as far as the eye can see. Whoever thought that hordes of marauders would be roaming the country was mistaken, at least as far as I can judge from here. These people in fact seem content to me, as if they had been reborn. This morning six Jews, who had been liberated from Belsen, came into the courtyard. The youngest was eleven years old. With a sense of wonder, with the longing of a child

who has never seen anything of the kind, he paged through some illustrated books. Even our cat awoke a sense of amazement in him, as if he were being approached by a powerful oneiric vision" (Ernst Jünger, *Tagebücher* III, Sämtliche Werke 3 [Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1979], 425). On this theme, see also Roberto Escobar, *Il silenzio dei persecutori ovvero il coraggio di Shahrazàd* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2001), 91ff.

59. For that matter, this theme is also a source of many polemics today, because there is a tendency to not distinguish between Auschwitz and other genocides, just as a distinction is not made between extermination camps and concentration camps. See Donatella Di Cesare, *Se Auschwitz è nulla: Contro il negazionismo* (Genoa: Il Melangolo, 2012), 107ff.

60. Hannah Arendt, "The Image of Hell," in *Essays on Understanding, 1930–1954: Formation, Exiles, and Totalitarianism*, trans. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken, 2005), 197–205.

61. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, 1973), 455.

62. On Heidegger's Bremen lectures, see Heinrich Wiegand Petzet, *Encounters and Dialogues with Martin Heidegger, 1929–1976*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (University of Chicago Press, 1993), 50–68.

63. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper, 2013), 3–35, 15. The text of this essay is an amplified and revised version of the lecture "Positionality."

64. Heidegger, "Positionality," in *Bremen and Freiburg Lectures: Insight Into That Which Is and Basic Principles of Thinking*, trans. Andrew J. Mitchell (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012), 27. On the vicissitudes of this passage, which was suppressed in the first edition, see Wolfgang Schirmacher, *Technik und*

Gelassenheit (Freiburg and Munich: Alber Verlag, 1983), 25.

65. Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art, and Politics: The Fiction of the Political*, 34.

66. See John D. Caputo, “Heidegger’s Scandal: Thinking and the Essence of the Victim,” in *The Heidegger Case: On Philosophy and Politics*, ed. Tom Rockmore and Joseph Margolis (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 265–81.

67. Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 1983), 302.

68. Robert John Sheffler Manning, “The Cries of Others and Heidegger’s Ear: Remarks on the Agriculture Remark,” in *Martin Heidegger and the Holocaust*, ed. Alan Milkman and Alan Rosenberg (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 1996), 19–30.

69. See Bret Davis, who, like Derrida when writing of “spirit,” indicates a remnant of metaphysics in Heidegger’s concept of “will”: Bret Davis, *Heidegger and the Will: On the Way to Gelassenheit* (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 297ff.

70. This also explains the attitude of many philosophers, especially in Germany, toward Auschwitz, which they still consider to be a histori-cal-political theme.

71. The letters signify: “Operation Night and Fog”; “Transport Night and Fog”; “Prisoner Night and Fog.” The French film director Alain Resnais chose this motto for the title of his documentary short film, the first filmed at Auschwitz, in 1955. It is interesting to note that Resnais was among the first Frenchmen to meet Heidegger: Rüdiger Safranski, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*, trans. Ewald Osers (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 348.

72. *Menschentümlichkeit* is the word used by Heidegger in a passage from the *Black Notebooks*: “The question of the role of world-Judaism is not a racial question, but a metaphysical

one, a question that concerns *the kind of human existence* which in an utterly unrestrained way can undertake as a world-historical 'task' the uprooting of all beings from Being" (Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV: Black Notebooks 1939–1941*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017], 191).

73. Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art, and Politics: The Fiction of the Political*, 35.

74. Peter Sloterdijk, *Rage and Time: A Psychopolitical Investigation*, trans. Mario Wenning (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 81.

75. Parmenides, *On Nature*, B 1, 9–10. In a letter to Jaspers dated August 12, 1949, Heidegger underlined the continuity of his own thinking with Parmenides' *eînai*. See *The Heidegger–Jaspers Correspondence (1920–1963)*, 172.

76. Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity*, trans. Stuart Woolf (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 22.

77. I owe this suggestion to the book by Max Dorra, whose point of view, however, I do not share. See Max Dorra, *Heidegger, Primo Levi et la séquoia: la double inconscience* (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), 31. Primo Levi cited Heidegger as one of the German "intellectuals" who "tended to follow in Hegel's footsteps," and became complicit with Nazi power. See Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988), 130.

78. Plato, *The Sophist*, 257b. In this way, Plato distinguished ontological meaning from logical-linguistic meaning, solving the enigma of predication.

79. This was Gadamer's observation, precisely with reference to Heidegger. See also Jacques Derrida, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Conférence de Heidelberg (1988)* (Paris: Lignes-Imec, 2014), 47–8.

80. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, §§46–53, 227–55.

81. Ibid., §51, 242–5.

82. See ibid., §65, 309–16. See also Pascal David, "Tempus mortis: La question de la mort à la lumière de la pensée de Heidegger," in *Heidegger, pensée de l'être et origine de la subjectivité*, ed. Maxence Caron (Paris: Cerf, 2006), 251–71.

83. Heidegger, "Why Poets?" (1946), in *Off the Beaten Track*, trans. and ed. Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 200–41.

84. Jean Améry, *At the Mind's Limits: Contemplations by a Survivor on Auschwitz and Its Realities*, trans. Sidney Rosenfeld and Stella P. Rosenfeld (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 15.

85. Ibid., 16–17.

86. Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*, 90.

87. Heidegger, "The Danger," in *Bremen and Freiburg Lectures*, 44–63, 53. But, once again, Heidegger showed ontological indifference by comparing what had happened in the death camps to people starving to death in China.

88. Ibid.

89. See Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Brooklyn: Zone Books, 1999), 60ff.

90. See Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*, 14ff. The German word *Gestell* means "shelf" or "frame." Rendered in English as "positionality" or "enframing," it is one of the most productive concepts in contemporary philosophy.

91. Heidegger, "Positionality," 35.

92. Ibid., 26.

93. See Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg, "Heidegger, Planetary Technics, and the Holocaust," in *Martin Heidegger*

and the Holocaust, 215–35.

94. This confusion – unconscious or not – continues to persist. See, for example, Tzvetan Todorov, *Memory as a Remedy for Evil*, trans. Gila Walker (London: Seagull Books, 2010).

95. See Wolfgang Sofsky, *The Order of Terror: The Concentration Camp*, trans. William Templer (Princeton University Press, 1997), 259ff.

96. See Yehuda Bauer, *Rethinking the Holocaust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

97. Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), 54.

98. Günther Anders, *Wir Eichmannssöhne*: *Offener Brief an Klaus Eichmann* (Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 1964), 28–9.

99. Ibid.

100. Ibid.

101. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 9.

102. Ibid., 17.

103. Ibid.

104. Ibid., 16.

105. Ibid., 18.

106. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 177.

107. Ibid., 203.

108. Heidgegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 16.

109. Ibid.

110. Ibid., 28.

111. Ibid., 37.

112. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 206–7.

113. See Peter Trawny, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish World Conspiracy*, trans. Andrew J. Mitchell (University of Chicago Press, 2015), 69.

114. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 187.

115. Ibid., 203.

116. See chapter III, section 19, above.

117. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XIV*, 206 (italics are mine).

118. Ibid.

119. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 18.

120. Ibid.

121. See chapter III, section 12, above.

122. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 20.

123. On the concept of *Umkehrung* and its connection with revolution, see section 22 below.

124. On Marx the Jew, understood as the "principle of hatred" during the Nazi period, see Claus-Ekkehard Bärsch, "Die politische Religion des Nationalsozialismus und der Topos der politischen Religion aus der Perspektive der Religionspolitologie," in *Politische Religion? Politik, Religion und Anthropologie im Werk von Eric Voegelin*, ed. Michael Ley, Heinrich Neisser, and Gilbert Weiss (Munich: Fink, 2003), 133. See also Alfred Rosenberg, *The Myth of the Twentieth Century: An Evaluation of the Spiritual–Intellectual Confrontations of our Age*, trans. Vivian Bird (San Francisco, CA: Blurb Publishers, 2017), 73ff.

125. See chapter III, section 9, above.

126. Heidegger wrote about this elsewhere: "If there had been no doctrine of ideas, there would be no Marxism. So Marxism cannot be defeated once and for all unless we first confront the doctrine of ideas and its two-millennia-long history": *Being and Truth*, §18, 118.

127. Heidegger, *Ammerkungen I*, 20.

128. Ibid.

129. It is worth noting that in this passage *Jüdische* appears three times in quotation marks, and one time without.

130. See section 6 above.

131. Hannah-Barbara Gel-Falkovitz, *Verzeihung des Unverzeihlichen? Ausflüge in Landschaften der Schuld un der Vergebung* (Dresden: Text and Dialog, 2013), 43ff.

132. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 187.

133. For that matter, this term had been frequently used as early as the 1920s and 1930s – think of *Mein Kampf* – to define the Jews. See chapter II, section 6, above.

134. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 47.

135. In 1946, Heidegger, the former rector of the University of Freiburg, was banned from teaching there.

136. Ibid.,136.

137. Ibid., 51.

138. Ibid., 63.

139. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen IV*, 375.

140. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen II*, 156.

141. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 82–5. Later, Heidegger also spoke openly about a plot: "Their plot will spread and become stronger" (*Anmerkungen V*, 462).

142. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 83.

143. Ibid.

144. Ibid., 83–4. We should remember that *verlacht* was the term used by Hitler when he taunted the Jews: "people laughed about my prophecies; a good number of those who laughed

then, are no longer laughing today." See chapter III, section 21, above.

145. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 84–5.

146. Trawny, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish World Conspiracy*, 74.

147. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen II*, 125. It is worth noting that *Unheil* is a term that in the earlier *Black Notebooks* Heidegger had used in reference to Judaism and the Jews. Thus, for him, Judaism was a disaster that produced another disaster, confirming his thesis that the extermination of the Jews was a case of self-annihilation.

148. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 59. In the space of a few lines, Heidegger repeated the word *auszehrend* no fewer than three times.

149. Ibid. The term *Henkerknechte*, literally "slaves of the executioners," was used by Heidegger here for emphasis, according to the oldest usage; it means men who are particularly savage and cruel.

150. Ibid., 77.

151. Ibid., 74.

152. Ibid., 84.

153. Ibid., 99.

154. Ibid.

155. Ibid., 25–99.

156. Ibid., 99–100.

157. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen V*, 494–5.

158. Ibid., 495.

159. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 99.

160. Ibid.

161. This interpretive strategy sheds light on many aspects of today's anti-Semitism.

162. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen II*, 136.

163. These are themes that appear in the films of Rainer Werner Fassbinder, from *The Marriage of Maria Braun* to *Lili Marlen*. During the 1970s, this film director contributed to sustaining the vision of the Germans as victims.

164. In the *Black Notebooks*, starting in 1945, Heidegger recognized the error of bad timing – his own, and that of the German people – as the only political mistake that had been made: Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I* and *II*, 98, 147, respectively.

165. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen II* and *I*, 138, 99, respectively.

166. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen V*, 460.

167. Ibid., 461.

168. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen II*, 146.

169. Ibid., 146.

170. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen V*, 460.

171. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen II*, 148.

172. Ibid., 151, 148.

173. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen V*, 444.

174. Ibid.

175. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen III*, 230.

176. See Heidegger, *Anmerkungen II* and *IV*, 150, 405.

177. Karl Jaspers, *The Question of German Guilt*, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: Fordham University Press, 2001).

178. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen II*, 134.

179. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 61.

180. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen II*, 146–7.

181. Ibid., 144.

182. In another annotation, Heidegger wrote: “It would be necessary someday to reflect, at least one time, on my anti-Christianity. [. . .] I am not a Christian simply because I cannot be. And I cannot be because, speaking in Christian terms, I do not have grace” (ibid., 199).

183. Ibid., 159.

184. This phrase had already occurred in some of the hurried passages of the *Black Notebooks*.

185. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 61.

186. Ibid., 62. On this play on words with the name “Heidegger,” note Celan’s reflections. See also section 22 below.

187. A harrow is an agricultural tool that has spikes or blades, usually used after plowing to break up compact clods of earth and to smooth over the soil, covering the sown seed.

188. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen II*, 159.

189. Ibid.

190. See, for example, *Being and Truth*, 4; *Logic as the Question Concerning the Essence of Language*, trans. Wanda Gregory and Yvonne Unna (Albany: SUNY Press, 2009), 86; “Nietzsche as the Thinker of the Consummation of Metaphysics,” in *The Will to Power as Knowledge*, vol. II: *Books III and IV*, trans. Anthony M. Ludovici (New York: Gordon Press, 1974); *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982); *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 30, 52; *Mindfulness*, trans. Parvis Emad and Thomas Kalary (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 215.

191. Heidegger, *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, trans. Keith Hoeller (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2000), 136–7.

192. On the theme of time in Judaism and in Heidegger's interpretation, see section 18 below.

193. See section 19 below.

194. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen V*, 438.

195. Marcionism, which developed over the course of the second century CE, was officially rejected by the Church. Nevertheless, it had a significant influence on the history of Christianity – an influence that can be said to still not be completely exhausted. As late as 1920, the Protestant theologian Adolf von Harnack maintained that the Church needed to liberate itself from the Old Testament. See Adolf von Harnack, *Marcion: The Gospel of the Alien God*, trans. John E. Steely and Lyle D. Bierma (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2007).

196. Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*, trans. Ernest Evans (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 15.

197. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen IV*, 369. In Judaism, any attempt to speak the name of God – therefore, the one in this quotation as well – is blasphemy, and constitutes an outrage. Here, because it is a quotation, it is unfortunately inevitable that I reproduce it.

198. A similar thesis, the focus of much controversy, has been posited by the Egyptologist Jan Assmann, who puts under accusation what he calls *mosaische Untersheidung*, "Mosaic distinction" – another way of saying monotheism; according to Assmann, political violence originates from this monotheistic idea that has ousted the gods, blocking a pluralistic, tolerant horizon. See Jan Assmann, *Of Gods and Gods: Egypt, Israel, and the Rise of Monotheism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2018); and *The Price of Monotheism*, trans. Robert Savage (Stanford University Press, 2010).

199. But Heidegger was wrong, because he did not know how far away the Hebrew name for God was from a common name that

designates a class of superior beings or that indicates the only remnant of a series of gods. Thus, his question: "Who is God? The most ancient, remote servant of Being?" See *Anmerkungen II*, 119. On the topic of Being and God, see also *Anmerkungen IV*, 356–3. See also section 19 below.

200. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen IV*, 409.

201. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen V*, 441.

202. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 51.

203. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen II*, 117.

204. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen IV*, 362.

205. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen V*, 461. And it is not by chance that this spirit of revenge was related by Heidegger to the "will to will" (*Willen zum Willen*). See also Heidegger, *Anmerkungen I*, 23, 92.

206. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen V*, 444.

207. Ibid., 445.

208. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, authorized English translation (New York Labor News Co., 1908). When Heidegger wrote this in 1948, it was the centenary of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, which had been published for the first time in 1848.

209. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen IV*, 440.

210. Heidegger, *Anmerkungen III*, 267.

211. Martin Buber, "Hope for this Hour," in *Pointing the Way*: *Collected Essays*, trans. Maurice S. Friedman (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), 220–9.

212. Heidegger, *Letters to His Wife, 1915–1970*, ed. Gertrud Heidegger (Cambridge: Polity, 2008), 225.

213. Gunther Neske, ed., *Erinnerungen an Martin Heidegger*

(Pfullingen: Neske, 1977), 90. See also Martin Buber, *The Knowledge of Man: Selected Essays*, trans. Maurice S. Friedman (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 1988), and *Eclipse of God: Studies in the Relation between Religion and Philosophy* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2016).

214. Vladimir Jankélévitch, "Should We Pardon Them?" trans. Ann Hobart, *Critical Inquiry* 22, 3 (Spring 1996): 552–72.

215. *Tractate Yoma* ch. 8, *Mishnah* 9.

216. Emmanuel Levinas, *Nine Talmudic Readings*, trans. Annette Aronowicz (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), 20.

217. Ibid., 25.

218. Jacques Derrida, "On Forgiveness," in *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 25–60.

219. Paul Celan, "Conversation in the Mountains," in *Selections*, 149ff.

220. Ibid.

221. Ibid. In German, the word *Name* is in this case deliberately ambiguous: when written with a lower-case *n*, it is unpronounceable because it is an insult; if written with a capital "N" it is the Name of God, the Tetragrammaton that is not pronounced in the Hebrew language.

222. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "The Spirit of Christianity," trans. T. M. Knox, in *Early Theological Writings* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 366. See also chapter II, section 4, above.

223. Jacques Derrida, *Schibboleth – pour Paul Celan* (Paris: Galilée, 1986), 64.

224. Celan, "Conversation in the Mountains," 150.

225. Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of Greek Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: Verso, 2009), 108ff.; Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, trans. Barbara E. Galli (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 85ff.

226. Celan, “Conversation in the Mountains,” 151.

227. The Shemāh is the prayer that begins with the words “Shemàh Israel.” It would be impossible to follow all of the innumerable paths in Celan’s text. For a commentary, see Stéphane Mosès, “Quand le langage se fait voix,” in Paul Celan, *Entretien dans le montagne*, trans. Stéphane Mosès (Paris: Verdier, 2001), 25–50.

228. For an overall view, see Christoph Shulte, ed., *Deutschtum und Judentum: Ein Disput unter Juden aus Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1993).

229. The English translation of this text by Rosenzweig is included in Leora Batnitzky, *Idolatry and Representation: The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig Reconsidered* (Princeton University Press, 2009), 170. *Chazan* means “cantor.”

230. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, revised edn., trans. Peter Winch (Oxford, and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1998), 16e. On this theme, see also Donatella Di Cesare, ‘Der größte jüdischer Denker is nur ein Talent (Ich z. B.)’: Wittgensteins versagtes Judentum,” *Wittgenstein-Studien* 2 (2011): 4–70.

231. Wittgenstein wrote “spirit” in quotation marks, citing Hegel.

232. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. P. M. S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2010), §67.

233. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 23e.

234. See Emmanuel Levinas, “Demanding Judaism,” in *Beyond the Verse: Talmudic Readings and Lectures*, trans. Gary D. Mole (London: Continuum, 2007), 3–12.

235. Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2013), 3.

236. Jacques Derrida, “Edmond Jabès and the Question of the Book,” in *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (University of Chicago Press, 1978), 64ff.

237. Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. Barbara Johnson (University of Chicago Press, 1981). See also Maurice Blanchot, “Being Jewish,” in *The Infinite Conversation*, trans. Susan Hanson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 123ff. On the figural Jew on the stage of contemporary philosophy, see Sarah Hammerschlag, *The Figural Jew: Politics and Identity in Postwar French Thought* (University of Chicago Press, 2010).

238. Derrida, “Edmond Jabès and the Question of the Book,” 73.

239. Martin Buber, *Tales of the Hasidim*, trans. Olga Marx (New York: Schocken Books, 1991), 233.

240. Heidegger, “Protokoll zu einem Seminar über *Zeit und Sein*,” in *Zur Sache des Denkens* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2012), 31–66, especially 37.

241. Ibid.

242. This is similar to the accusation in the context of which Heidegger attacked Husserl. See chapter III, section 16, above.

243. This is the reason why it is impossible, as some perhaps would like to do, to easily avoid the question of the Jews and the passages in which they appear in the *Black Notebooks*.

244. Heidegger, “Anaximander’s Saying,” in *Off the Beaten Path*, trans. Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 242ff.

245. See Di Cesare, “Übersetzen aus dem Schweigen,” 34.

246. Heidegger, “Dialogue on Language between a Japanese and an Inquirer,” in *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D.

Hertz (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), 9–10.

247. See Jean Beaufret, *Le chemin de Heidegger: Dialogue avec Heidegger IV* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1985), 49.

248. Heidegger, "Der Feldweg," in *Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens: 1910–1976*, GA 13 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2002), 87–90.

249. Heidegger, "Vom Geheimnis des Glockenturns (1954)," in *Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens*, 113–16.

250. Heidegger, "Abraham a Sankta [*sic*] Clara. Zur Enthüllung seines Denkmals in Kreenheinstetten am 15. August 1910," in *Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens*, 1–3. In this sense, the chapter of more than 20 pages, entitled "Abraham a Sancta Clara and Martin Heidegger's First Written Work," which Farías devoted to this theme, is excessive. See Víctor Farías, *Heidegger and Nazism*, trans. Joseph Margolis and Tom Rockmore (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 24–37. Another lecture that Heidegger gave in Messkirch on May 2, 1964, has a similar tone: Heidegger, *Über Abraham a Sancta Clara* (Messkirch: Stadtverwaltung, 1964).

251. See Hugo Ott, *Martin Heidegger: A Political Life*. On Heidegger's complicated relationship with Christianity, see Didier Franck, *Heidegger et le christianisme: l'explication silencieuse* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2004).

252. Heidegger, *Duns Scotus' Theory of the Categories and of Meaning*, trans. John van Buren, in *Supplements: From the Earliest Essays to Being and Time and Beyond*, ed. John van Buren (State University of New York, 2002).

253. Heidegger, "The Philosophical Foundations of Medieval Mysticism," in *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferncei (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004), 231–52.

254. On Heidegger's relationship with the works of Luther and the

influence on him of New Testament sources, see Christian Sommer, *Heidegger, Aristote, Luther: Les sources aristotéliciennes et néo-testamentaires d'Être et Temps* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2005), 17ff.

255. Ibid., 395.

256. Ibid., 418.

257. Ibid., 421. See also Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*, trans. E. Allison Peers (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2007), 19. Teresa of Avila was very much read during these years. Among the phenomenologists, she probably constituted a sort of transition from Judaism to Christianity, favoring the kinds of conversions to Christianity that Husserl disliked. The daughter of *conversos* from Toledo, Teresa brought with her the dissent of the *marranos*, the need to begin a new theology which – like that of Francisco Osuna and Juan of the Cross, also *conversos* – was opposed to scholasticism: God was the object of knowing, but the goal was to be reached through an interior ascension.

258. Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 57.

259. Ibid., 166ff.

260. Heidegger's interpretation of Paul inspired Agamben, who found a point of reference in Walter Benjamin. See Giorgio Agamben, *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*, trans. Patricia Dailey (Stanford University Press, 2005).

261. Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 49.

262. Ibid., 48.

263. See chapter III, section 21, above. It should be pointed out that the context of the debate about Paul in Nazi circles as it related to Heidegger's interpretations of the apostle has up to now been neglected.

264. On the Jewish side at the time, there was an awareness that there should be a response to these interpretations of "the

original Christianity"; but time was running out for the European Jews. A significant case is that of Sholem Asch, who, after succeeding in emigrating from Poland to the United States, began writing in Yiddish, and published in English the novels *The Nazarene* in 1939 and *The Apostle* in 1943. Asch restored to history and to Judaism the figures of Jesus as the Rabbi of Nazareth and Saul of Tarsus as a Jew. He reconstructed the error of Saul at Damascus, committed by a man who had never ceased to be a Jew. In his novel *The Apostle*, Asch had the character of Jacob ben Joseph, the oldest of the five brothers of Jesus, tell Saul how much his message had wounded the conscience of Israel. See Sholem Asch, *The Apostle*, trans. Maurice Samuel (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1943).

265. Heidegger, *Phenomenology of Religious Life*, 48, 49, 51, 78–9.

266. Ibid., 48.

267. Suffice it here to mention two classic works: the *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum neuen Testament* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933–78), and Thorleif Boman, *Das hebräische Denken im Vergleich mit dem griechischen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1952).

268. Jacob Taubes, *The Political Theology of Paul*, trans. Dana Hollander (Stanford University Press, 2008), 4.

269. Ibid., 92.

270. Paul Ricoeur, "Note introductive," in *Heidegger et la question de Dieu*, ed. Richard Kearney and Joseph O'Leary (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2009), 37.

271. Heidegger, "Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking," in *Discourse on Thinking: A Translation of "Gelassenheit,"* trans. John M. Anderson and E. Hans Freund (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 74.

272. Marlène Zarader makes reference to Heidegger's university course, which had not yet been published. On the basis of the

text, today the correspondences and references are clearer. Obviously, it is not possible to provide a complete interpretation here.

273. I Thessalonians 5:2; see also Talmud *Sanhedrin* 97a.

274. Marlène Zarader, *The Unthought Debt: Heidegger and the Hebraic Heritage*, trans. Bettina Bergo (Stanford University Press, 2006), 1ff.

275. There is a vast literature on Heidegger by Jewish thinkers – a chapter that has yet to be written. The first book of this kind about Heidegger, published in America, was the one by Michael Wyshogrod, *Kierkegaard and Heidegger: The Ontology of Existence* (London: Routledge and Kegan, 1953). Scult has emphasized Heidegger's hermeneutic affinities: Allen Michael Scult, *Being Jewish / Reading Heidegger: An Ontological Encounter* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004). The American Kabbalah scholar Elliot Wolfson dedicated a chapter of his 2014 book to Heidegger: *Giving Beyond the Gift: Apophasis and Overcoming Theomania* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 227–60.

276. Zarader, *The Unthought Debt*, 8. This unsaid thing, this "blank" – as Zarader observes – did not constitute a problem for the generations of readers who followed. Also along these lines is the volume by Aniceto Molinaro, ed., *Heidegger e San Paolo: Interpretazione fenomenologico dell'epistolario paolino* (Vatican City: Urbaniana University Press, 2008).

277. Zarader, *The Unthought Debt*, 13.

278. Ibid.

279. Heidegger, "Zürcher Seminar," in *Seminare*, GA 15 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2005), 437.

280. Heidegger, *Letter on "Humanism,"* in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeil (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 267.

281. *Gott* means "he who is invoked" or "he to whom sacrifice is made."

282. Exodus 3:14.

283. Bernard Dupuy, “Heidegger et le Dieu inconnu,” in *Heidegger et la question de Dieu*, ed. Kearney and O’Leary, 123–41.

284. Jonas, “Heidegger and Theology,” 248.

285. Taubes, *Occidental Eschatology*, 16.

286. Lyotard, *Heidegger and “the Jews,”* 22.

287. Heidegger, “The Rectorate 1933/34: Facts and Thoughts” (1945), in *Martin Heidegger and National Socialism*, ed. Gunther Neske and Emil Kettering (New York: Paragon, 1990), 15–32.

288. Lyotard, *Heidegger and “the Jews,”* 80.

289. Ibid.

290. Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art, and Politics: The Fiction of the Political,* 39.

291. Heidegger, *Über den Anfang*, GA 70 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2005), 10–11.

292. Reiner Schürmann, *Heidegger on Being and Acting: From Principles to Anarchy*, trans. Christine-Marie Gros (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987). See also Alberto Martinengo, *Introduzione a Reiner Schürmann* (Rome: Meltemi, 2008), 82–3.

293. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, §65, 315.

294. Heidegger, “On the Essence of Ground,” in *Pathmarks*, 97–135.

295. Ibid., 108–9.

296. Heidegger, “Why Poets?” (1946), 200–41. See also Donatella Di Cesare, “Escatologia dell’Essere: Quel che resta de Heidegger tra la finitezza originaria e infinito negato,” in *Martin Heidegger trent’anni dopo*, ed. Carlo Gentili,

Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann, and Aldo Venturelli (Genoa: Il Melangolo, 2009), 131–47.

297. See Sebastian Galanti Grollo, *Heidegger e il problema dell'altro* (Milan: Mimesis, 2006).

298. Quoted by Heidegger in *Ponderings VII–XI*, §14, 206. The original passage is in Hannah Arendt, *Rahel Varnhagen: The Life of a Jewess*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 167.

299. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, second edition (University of Chicago Press, 1998), 247. Translation modified.

300. See Vincenzo Vitiello, *Cristianesimo senza redenzione* (Rome and Bari: Laterza, 1995), 67–71; and Paolo Vinci, *Essere e esperienza in Heidegger: Una fenomenologia possibile fra Hegel e Hölderlin* (Rome: Stamen, 2008), 93ff.

301. Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister,"* trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996), and *Letter on "Humanism,"* 258.

302. Heidegger, "As When on a Holiday," in *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, 69.

303. See Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 137.

304. Ibid., 103. See also chapter III, section 6, above.

305. Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, 103. The concept of "revolution" as dealt with throughout the *Black Notebooks* goes beyond National Socialism, which up to now most scholars have focused on. See, for example, Bernhard Taureck, "Heideggers Interesse an der 'nationalsozialistischen Revolution': Ein metaphernkritischer Versuch," in *Politische Unschuld? In Sachen Martin Heidegger*, ed. Bernhard Taukek (Munich: Fink, 2008), 143–201.

306. Heidegger, *The History of Beyng*, 22. See also Heidegger,

“Overcoming Metaphysics,” in *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Wolin (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), 67ff.

307. See chapter III, section 18, above.

308. Jacob Taubes, “Carl Schmitt: Apocalyptic Prophet of the Counterrevolution,” in *To Carl Schmitt: Letters and Reflections*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 1ff.

309. Günther Anders, *Über Heidegger* (Munich: Beck, 2001), 325.

310. Ibid., 329.

311. Paul Celan, *Snow Part = Schneepart*, trans. Ian Fairley (Riverdale-on-Hudson, NY: Sheep Meadow Press, 2007), 46–7.

312. Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (of the Event)*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu, ed. John Sallis (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2012), 327.

313. Ibid., 313–18.

314. Ibid., 314.

315. Walter Benjamin, *On the Concept of History* (New York: Classic Books of America, 2009), 2.

316. Ibid., 6.

Index

A

Abarbanel, Isaac, 139

Abraham, 41, 42, 161

Abraham a Sancta Clara, 231–2

Adorno, Theodor, 15, 19, 92, 180–1, 187, 225

Africans, 81–2, 83

Agamben, Giorgio, 14

Améry, Jean, 58, 192

Amos, 217–18

Anaximander, 80

ancient Greece, 44, 80–4, 85, 121, 131–2, 143, 173, 200, 236

ancient Rome, 53–4, 141, 176, 177

Anders, Günther, 112, 180, 196, 245

anti-Semitism

- *bellum judaicum*, 175–7, 178, 189, 210
- biologicalization, 102–3, 104, 107–10
- book burning, 93–5
- capitalism, 86–7
- Christian anti-Semitism, 72
- competition anti-Semitism, 7
- deracification of peoples, 103–6
- Enlightement, 26–36
- Frege, 5
- German philosophers, 22–59
- German tradition, 112

Hegel, ix, 36–46, 52, 53, 84, 85, 161, 164, 169, 225
Heidegger
betrayal of German essence, 202–6
Black Notebooks, 13–14, 69
debate, viii, 6–9
desertification, 100–1
Jewish intellectuals, 88–92
Jewish prophecy, 212–18
Jünger and, 123–9
machination, 98–9
metaphysical anti-Semitism, viii–x, 9, 106–15, 164–8, 180, 201, 213
never-dispelled doubts, 69–75
oblivion of Being, 77–80, 83, 177, 189–91, 229–33, 238–9
postwar, 212–18
purification of Being, 169–72, 202
rootlessness, 84–7, 92, 161–2
Schmitt and, 129–42
terminology, 71–2, 203
world conspiracy, 148–54
worldlessness, 161–4
Hitler, 26–7, 59–64, 72, 102–3, 105, 110, 152, 156, 157–8
Holocaust. *See* Shoah
Jewish intellectuals and, 88–92
Kant, ix, 26, 28, 32–6, 38, 39, 42, 53, 62, 127, 161, 169
Luther, 22–6, 34, 35, 57, 232
modern anti-Semitism, 72
Nazism, 101–3, 110–15, 148, 171
annihilation of Jews, 152–3

Nietzsche, ix, 26, 46–59, 169

nineteenth century, 125

otherness, viii, ix, 28, 61, 81–2, 131, 133–4, 137, 140, 142, 189, 191, 220, 228, 241–3

ritual murder, 113–14

Schmitt, 9, 71, 76, 134–42, 168, 171

Shoah. *See* Shoah

Spain, 111–12, 139

vampirism, 103, 113–14

Antichrist, 57, 103, 109, 139, 150, 199, 200, 247

apocalypse, 24, 101–3, 140, 156, 157, 176, 190, 199–200, 202, 240–1, 245–7

Aquinas, Thomas, 232

Arendt, Hannah

anti-Semitism and Enlightenment, 28

on German escape from responsibility, 178

on German world domination, 152

Heidegger and Plato, 14, 20

Heidegger's love affair with, 7, 169

Heidegger's anti-Semitism and, 6

Heidegger's correspondence with, 2, 67, 69–70

leaving Germany, 70

"Martin Heidegger at Eighty," 14–15

Rahel Varnhagen, 242–3

on Shoah, 186, 194, 196

on totalitarianism, 185, 186

Aristotle, 3, 18, 21, 118, 120, 227

Aschheim, Steven, 48

Augustine of Hippo, 23, 36, 39, 233

Auschwitz. *See* Shoah

Axebrod, Towia, 155

B

Baeumler, Alfred, 48, 74, 129

Bauer, Walter, 74

Baumgarten, Eduard, 74

Beaufret, Jean, 12

Beek, Gottfried zur, 151

Behemoth, 138–9

being

ancient Greece, 80–4, 85

beginning, 148, 241–3

being-in-the-world, 161–4

history of Being, 8, 20, 66, 76–85, 99, 128–9, 159, 164–5, 167, 170–1, 188, 197–8, 201–2, 207, 209, 246–7

Jews' non-being, 77–80, 83, 177, 189–91, 190, 229–33, 238–9

language and Being, 230–1

metaphysical anti-Semitism, viii–ix, 106–15, 164–8, 180, 201, 213

metaphysics, 77–8

night of Being, 65–7, 80

nothingness, 172–4

pagan landscape, 240–1, 245–6

purification of Being and Jews, 169–72, 202

Western tradition, 80–4

bellum judaicum, 175–7, 178, 189, 210

Bendavid, Lazarus, 36

Benjamin, Walter, 124, 175, 181, 226, 246–7
Bernard of Clairvaux, 232, 233
Bernstein, Richard, 179
betrayal, 203–6
biological racism, 58, 102–3, 104, 107–10, 168
Blochmann, Elisabeth, 7, 75
blood, 61–2, 105–15, 125–6, 154, 170, 189, 197
Bloy, Léon, 125
Blüher, Hans, 168
Böhme, Jakob, 237
Bolshevism, 106, 151, 154–61, 234, 244–5
book burning, 93–5
Brentano, Franz, 231
Brock, Werner, 6–7
Buber, Martin, 223, 225, 235
Büchner, Georg, 225
Bultmann, Rudolf, 183, 236

C

Cassirer, Ernst, 70
Catholicism, 32, 72, 86, 92, 125, 132, 135, 145, 218, 231, 232
Celan, Paul, 4, 22, 180–3, 225–6, 230, 245–6
Chaplin, Charlie, 96
Clausewitz, Carl von, 146
Cohen, Hermann, 74, 226
Cohn, Norman, 150
Cold War, 178, 187
Colli, Giorgio, 47
colonialism, 81–2

concentration camps, 206–11
Cossman, Paull Nicolaus, 126
Craig, Carl, 232

D

Darwinism, 108
Däubler, Theodor, 60
David, King, 40
Deleuze, Gilles, 85
democracy, 101, 105, 135, 208, 211, 212–13, 215
deracification of peoples, 103–6
Derrida, Jacques
    Being, 66
    on Celan, 225
    death, 14
    on Hegel, 43, 45, 46
    on Heidegger, 4, 13, 91, 93–5, 107, 147
    humanist teleology, 163
    on Jewishness, 228–9
    on Nietzsche, 49
    Politics of Friendship, 132–3
    on spirit, 17, 91, 93–5, 107
    "To Forgive," 224
Descartes, René, 119–20
desertification, 99–101
dichotomies, 33, 78, 86, 88, 141–4, 166–7, 168
Diehl, Karl, 115
Dilthey, Wilhelm, 232
Dohm, Christian Wilhelm von, 28

Dostoyevsky, Fyodor, 138, 232
Dresden, 186
Dühring, Eugen, 72, 110
Duns Scotus, 93–4, 232

E

Ebert, Friedrich, 155
Eckart, Dietrich, 103, 151, 156, 159, 234
Eckhart von Hochheim, Meister, 232
Eichmann, Adolf, 194, 196
Eisner, Kurt, 155
Encyclopaedia Judaica, 85–6
Engels, Friedrich, 222
Enlightenment, 27–36
esoteric writings, 68–9
Esther, 113
eugenics, 48, 111, 114
Eurocentricism, 81–2
Exodus, 41–2, 56, 100, 228, 239

F

Farias, Victor, 3, 12, 15
Faye, Emmanuel, 3, 12–13, 14, 15
Fédier, François, 11–12, 13
Feinmann, José Pablo, 65
Ferry, Luc, 17
Fichte, Johann Gottlieb, 30–2, 59, 84
Final Solution, 26, 28, 157, 178, 186, 188–90, 201
Fischer, Eugen, 111

forgiveness, 223–4
Förster, Bernhard, 47, 53
Foucault, Michel, 14
France
anti-Semitism, 27–8
Enlightenment, 27–8, 32
Heidegger controversy, 11–13
Paris Commune, 156
Revolution, 31
Frederick Barbarossa, 158
Frege, Gottlob, 5
Freud, Sigmund, 92, 93, 152
Frisch, Karl von, 110

G

Gadamer, Hans-Georg, viii, 15, 119
Geist (spirit), 17, 86, 89–91, 93–5, 107, 137, 221–2
geopolitical hierarchy, 82–3
Germany
1919 revolution, 155
ancient Greece and, 80–4
anti-Semitic philosophers, 22–64
anti-Semitic tradition, 112
betrayal of German essence, 203–6
crimes against Germans, 211–12
German blood, 27, 52, 73, 109, 115, 197
guilt, 211–12
Holocaust. *See* Shoah
Kristallnacht, 75, 103

Nazism. *See* Nazism

Nuremberg Laws, 103, 104, 111, 137

postwar amnesia, 178–84

revenge on, 220–2

sacral laws, 73

Weimar Republic, 88–9, 124, 135, 151

World War II, 145–8

defeat, 202–6

Gestell, 193–4

Glucksmann, André, 1

Gnoli, Antonio, 124, 125

gnosticism, 176, 218–19

Gödsche, Hermann Ottomar Friedrich, 149–50

Goebbels, Joseph, 103, 157–8

Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 181

Golovinski, Matvei, 150

Göring, Hermann, 130

Gougenot des Mousseaux, Roger, 153

Grass, Günther, 117

Grassi, Ernesto, 93

Grimm Brothers, 96

Guattari, Félix, 85

Gurian, Waldemar, 168, 283n447

H

Habermas, Jürgen, 16, 17, 19

Hegel, G. W. F.

ancient Greece, 81, 85

anti-Semitism, ix, 36–46, 52, 53, 84, 85, 161, 164, 169, 225

Heidegger and, 141, 143, 199, 227, 232
idealism, 89
metaphysics, 200
philosophical tradition, 164, 188
"Philosophy of Right," 131
Heidegger, Elfride, 73, 88, 223
Heidegger, Gertrud, 73
Heidegger, Hermann, 9
Heine, Heinrich, 113–14, 139
Heraclitus, 147
Herder, Johann Gottfried von, 30–1
Hersch, Jeanne, 8
Herzl, Theodor, 150
Hitler, Adolf
anti-Semitism, 26–7, 59–64, 72, 102–3, 105, 110, 152, 156, 157–8
Heidegger and, 75, 110, 211
intelligentsia and, 92
Jünger and, 124–5
Kant and, 33–4
Mein Kampf, 59–64, 72, 105, 110, 152, 156
Nero Decree, 64
Nietzsche and, 47, 58, 59
Schmitt and, 136–7
speeches, 148, 157, 158
Wittgenstein and, 227
Hobbes, Thomas, 138, 140
Hölderlin, Friedrich, 68, 73, 81, 95, 143, 192, 196–7, 217, 236, 240, 243–6

Holocaust. *See* Shoah Hönigswald, Richard, 74–5

Husserl, Edmund, 70, 74, 82, 115–23

Husserl, Malvine, 115

Ingarden, Roman, 120

I

Inquisition, 112, 139

intellectualism, 91

intellectuals, Jewish intellectuals, 88–92, 175–7

Italy, anti-Semitism, 27

J

Jaegerschmid, Adelgundis, 116

Jankélévitch, Vladimir, 224

Japan, 61, 85

Jaspers, Karl, 3, 4, 74, 89, 129, 149, 183, 205, 212, 215

Jewish Infantry Brigade Group, 177

Job, Book of, 138

Jogiches, Leo, 155

John’s apocalypse, 103, 156

John’s Gospel, 45, 54, 125, 233

Joly, Maurice, 150

Jonas, Hans, 6, 7, 116–17, 176–7, 218–19

Josephus, Flavius, 43, 176

Judeo-Bolshevism, 151, 154–61, 186, 234, 245

Jünger, Ernst, 9, 96, 107, 123–9, 131, 138, 159, 171

Kabbalism, 138–9, 149, 153, 173, 237

K

Kafka, Franz, 37, 225

Kant, Immanuel

anti-Semitism, ix, 26, 28, 32–6, 38, 39, 42, 53, 62, 127, 161, 169

neo-Kantianism, 74, 75, 121

philosophical tradition, 164

universalism, 226

Kaufmann, Walter, 47

Kierkegaard, Søren, 232

Klemperer, Viktor, 109

Kristallnacht, 75, 103

Kuhn, Helmut, 129

L

Lacoue-Labarthe, Philippe, 14, 17, 179, 187, 190, 241

Laléko, Mascha, 7

Landauer, Gustav, 155

Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm, 172

Lenin, Vladimir, 244–5

Lessing, Gotthold, 27, 28

Levi, Paul, 155

Levi, Primo, 190, 192

Leviathan, 138–40

Levinas, Emmanuel, 19, 46, 175, 176, 223, 224, 228

Leviné, Eugen, 155

Leviticus, 105–6

Lichtheim, George, 48

Liebknecht, Karl, 155

Litvinov, Maxim Maximovich, 158–9

Löwenthal, Leo, 93
Löwith, Karl, 6, 71, 117, 123, 129
Lukács, György, 47
Luther, Martin, 22–6, 34, 35, 57, 74, 134, 232, 235
Lutheranism, 27, 29, 33, 39
Luxemburg, Rosa, 155
Lycurgus, 42
Lyotard, François, 17, 169, 179, 240

M

"machination," 96–9, 104, 106, 121–2, 146, 149, 152, 153, 160, 161, 162, 171, 202, 211
Madagascar Plan, 264n72
Mahnke, Dietrich, 120
Manicheanism, 27
Mann, Thomas, 156
Mannheim, Karl, 90, 175
Marcionism, 218
Marcuse, Herbert, 6, 129, 179, 184–6, 187, 208
Marr, Wilhelm, 57, 72, 110
Martin, Bernd, 6
Martius, Hedwig Conrad, 112
Marx, Karl, 92, 138, 156, 159, 199, 200, 222
Marxism, 19, 47, 63, 87, 91, 92, 93, 200
Matthew's Gospel, 114
Mendelssohn, Moses, 27, 30, 34, 138, 226
Mephistopheles, 103
Mesopotamia, 240
metaphysics

Judaism and, 77–80, 120–1
Marxism and, 200
metaphysical anti-Semitism, viii–x, 106–15, 164–8, 180, 201, 213
ontological massacre, ix, 188–91, 202
Shoah, 194
socialism, 160
Michaelis, Johann David, 29
Misch, Georg, 70
Mischling, 110–11
Misnah, 224
Mittmann, Thomas, 48
monotheism, 43, 211, 218–19
Montinari, Mazzino, 47
Moses, 41, 42, 44, 239
Mühsam, Erich, 155
Müller, Ludwig, 151
Mussolini, Benito, 130
mysticism, 124, 181, 232, 233

N

Napoleon III, 150
NATO, 178
Nazism
1980s debate, 186
anti-intellectualism, 92
anti-Semitism, 101–3, 110–15, 148
    annihilation of Jews, 152–3
    defining Jews, 110–11

Heidegger and, 171
bio-political programs, 58
bureaucratic criminality, 195–6
communism and, 178, 185–6
concept of politics, 144
Heidegger and
1933 membership, 3, 9, 16, 179
anti-intellectualism, 92
anti-Semitism, 171
apocalypse, 199–200
Bolshevism and, 160
defence, 186
dictatorship and, 211
Husserl and, 120
inflammatory polemic, 89–90
Mein Kampf, 59
metaphysics, 169
posthumous trial, 12–17
postwar silence, 179–80
punishment, 211
question, 3–6
spiritual renewal, 184–5
Holocaust. *See* Shoah
Jewish intellectual refugees and, 175–7
Jünger and, 124–5
lies, 190
Nietzsche and, 47–8
nihilism, 176

paganism, 176
philosophy and, 19–20
Schmitt, 129, 135, 136
Shoah. *See* Shoah
Neimeyer (publisher), 117
neo-Kantianism, 74, 75, 121
Nero Decree, 64
Neumann, Franz, 133
new nationalism, 124, 126, 135, 168
Niekisch, Ernst, 155
Nietzsche, Elisabeth, 47
Nietzsche, Friedrich
ancient Greece, 81
anti-Semitism, ix, 26, 46–59, 169
death of God, 240
Heidegger and, 105, 127, 159, 232
on Heine, 113–14
Hitler and, 47, 58, 59
metaphysics, 77
nihilism, 207
philosophical tradition, 164, 188
on philosophy, 5
race, 107
terminology, 106
Zarathrustra, 105, 225
"night and fog" (*Nacht und Nebel*) 189
nihilism, 49, 67, 80, 92, 123, 125, 127–8, 137, 173, 176, 198, 202, 206–7, 240–1

Nilus, Sergei, 150
Nolte, Ernst, 15
Nuremberg Laws, 103, 104, 111, 137
Nuremberg Trials, 141, 180, 223

O

O'Brien, Conor Cruise, 48
ontological massacre, ix, 188–91, 202
Ott, Hugo, 3
Overbeck, Franz, 46

P

pacifism, 60, 93, 148, 153
pagan landscape, 240–1, 245–6
Parmenides, 80, 190–1
Paul, Saint, 32, 36, 55, 130, 134, 139, 156, 233–7
phenomenology, 112, 115, 117–21
Plato, 14, 77, 132, 164–5, 188, 191
Pompey the Great, 43
positionality. See *Gestell* prophecy, 153, 157, 212–18
Protestantism, 23, 32, 86, 232, 234
See also Lutheranism
Protocols of the Elders of Zion, 150–4
psychoanalysis, 19, 92
Rachkovsky, Pyotr Ivanovich, 150

R

racism
anti-Semitism. *See* anti-Semitism

biologicalization, 58, 102–3, 104, 107–10, 168
deracification of peoples, 103–6
geopolitical hierarchy, 81–3
metaphysical racism, 106–15
race or rank, 106–10
Radek, Karl, 158, 159
Reformation, 22–6, 29
Reinach, Adolph, 112
Renaut, Alain, 17
Resnais, Alain, 290n71
Ricoeur, Paul, 236
Rilke, Rainer Maria, 232
Ritter, Gerhard, 115
ritual murder, 113–14
Rockmore, Tom, 16
rootlessness, 84–7, 92, 161–2
Rorty, Richard, 15
Rosenberg, Alfred, 106, 114, 123, 151, 157
Rosenzweig, Franz, 161, 226, 235
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 21
Rubiner, Frida, 155
Safranski, Rüdiger, 6, 7

S

Satan, 103, 139, 156
Scheler, Max, 74, 89, 112
Schelling, Friedrich, 232, 237
Schlageter, Leo, 90
Schleirmacher, Friedrich, 232

Schmitt, Carl
- anti-Semitism, 9, 71, 76, 134–42, 168, 171
- on democracy, 211
- friend/enemy relationship, 60, 127, 128, 131–4, 141–2
- Heidegger and, 129–42, 144, 145–6, 147, 245
- Jünger and, 124, 125, 126, 131
- meaning of Jew, 165
- Nazism, 129, 135, 136
- on race, 106, 107
- on World War II defeat, 203

scholasticism, 97, 231–2

Scholem, Gershom, 181

Schopenhauer, Arthur, 26, 59, 61

Schürmann, Reiner, 17

Schwoerer, Viktor, 71

self-annihilation, 199–206

Septuagint, 239

Shoah
- 1980s debate, 186
- *bellum judaicum*, 175–7, 178, 189, 210
- bureaucracy, 193, 194
- camps, 206–11
- crime against humanity, 195–6
- death of God, 241
- Final Solution, 26, 28, 157, 178, 186, 188–90, 201
- first signs, 175
- forgiveness, 223–4
- guilt, 211–12

Heidegger's postwar silence, 178–88, 201, 203
intellectual refugees and, 175–7
liquidation, 191–3
ontological massacre, ix, 188–91, 202
philosophy and, 224–9
poetry after Auschwitz, 180
production of corpses, 184–8, 192
revenge, 220–3
self-annihilation of Jews, 199–202
victims, 206–11
Simmel, Georg, 74
Simon, Marcel, 141
Socrates, 164–5
Solomon, 40
Solon, 42
Sombart, Werner, 86–7, 88
Soviet Union
Bolshevism, 154, 244–5
German invasion, 157–8
October Revolution, 156, 157
World War II, 140
Spain
anti-Semitism, 111–12, 139
Inquisition, 112, 139
Spartacists, 155
Spengler, Oswald, 80, 156
Spinoza, Benedictus de, 1, 30, 34, 45, 88, 138
spirit. See *Geist*

Staiger, Emil, 235

Stalin, Joseph, 158

Stalinism, 185–6

Stein, Edith, 112, 116

Steiner, George, 16, 179

Strauss, Leo, 12, 129

Streicher, Julius, 22

Suárez, Francisco, 232

T

Talmud, 139, 229

Taubes, Jacob, 130, 140, 176, 234

Teresa of Avila, 232, 233

Toller, Ernst, 155

Tönnies, Ferdinand, 88

Torah, 25, 97, 100, 105, 136, 229, 235, 236, 238–9

Trakl, Georg, 95, 232

Trawny, Peter, 8, 10, 184

Trotsky, Leon, 74, 155, 156

U

Ulmen, Gary, 130

V

Valéry, Paul, 89

vampirism, 103, 113–14

Varnhagen, Rahel Levin, 242–3

Versailles Treaty (1919), 153

Veschuer, Ottmar von, 111

Vico, Giambattista, 27
Volpi, Franco, 68, 124, 125
Voltaire, 27–8

W

Wagner, Richard, 55, 72, 127, 189
Wannsee Conference (1942), 185
Weber, Max, 81, 86, 90, 96
Weil, Simone, 71
Weimar Republic, 88–9, 124, 135, 151
Wittgenstein, Ludwig, 5, 165–6, 227
Wolin, Richard, 6
World War I, 47, 124, 151
World War II. *See* Germany

Y

Yerushalmi, Yosef Hayim, 112
Yochanan, Rabbi, 139
Yom Kippur, 224
Yovèl, 42, 57

Z

Zaborowski, Holger, 7
Zarader, Marlène, 94, 237
Zarathustra, 99
Zionism, 63, 126, 150–1, 155, 226